

ST

ACTION

THE WORLD'S ONLY DEDICATED
ST GAMES MAGAZINE

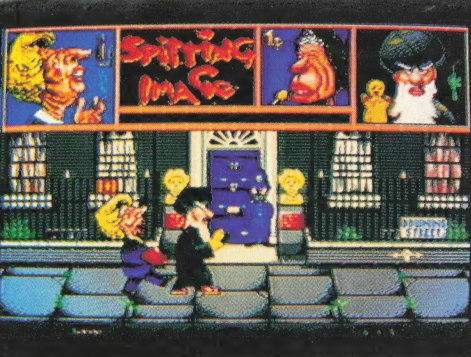
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VOLUME 1 ISSUE 8 DECEMBER 1988
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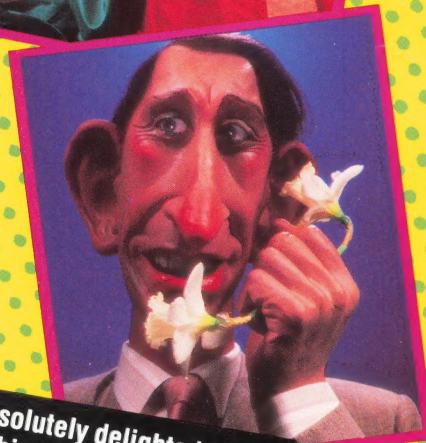


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FEATURE ARTICLES

ACTION NEWS: Standing room only this month! Martin Moth reports on developments at; Novagen, Thalamus, Cascade, Mastertronic, Konix, Electric Dreams, Activision, Red Rat, Gremlin, Eclipse, Titus, Psygnosis, Palace, Tynesoft, Elite and Domark amongst others.

4



MICROPROSE

INTERVIEW: MicroProse are as well known for the larger-than-life figurehead of Major 'Wild Bill' Stealey as they are for their realistic combat simulations. Martin Moth reports on the 'gung-holier than thou' attitude that pervades the company.

18



COMPILATIONS

MEGATEST: 'The emergence of software compilations at Christmas time is as inevitable as rain, and the long-winded Woolworth TV commercials. Jason Spiller reviews six 'bargain bundles' from various companies, questions the ethics behind the software compilation and discovers how this may benefit the ST user.

25

GIVING THE GAME

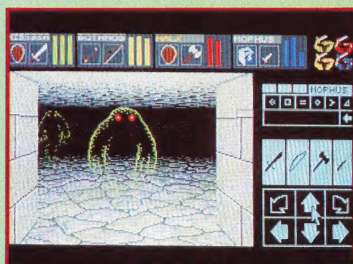
AWAY: Amongst Steve's tips this month are; Street Fighter, Nebulus, Revenge of Doh, Super Hang-On and Starglider II. Mark Lawrence, however, offers pokes for Wizball, Overlander, Space Harrier and Army Moves.

46

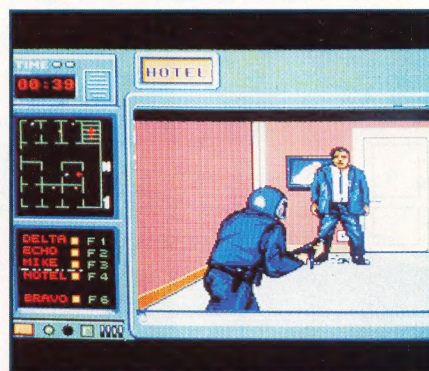
DUNGEON MASTER

EDITOR: Speculation about the availability of a dungeon editor has been rife, although all claims have been false... until now! Nick Clarkson reports on Softex's 'Dungeon Master Editor', and talks to its programmer, Ed Penman.

57



REVIEWS



HOSTAGES: 1900 hours, 12.08.88. ITN report - central London. "Information is patchy, but it is estimated that nine terrorists have entered the Miracian embassy. Until now there has been no communication and so their identity is unknown, but in the wake of the assassination of President Mharouch, police suspect an extreme faction of the Schoulac militia!"

36

ELEMENTAL: 'Vive la difference!' Some of the most original software for the ST has been exported from belle France. Could this be attributed to natural French flair - or a few too many glasses of Beaujolais? Whatever the reason, they are breathing 'A Breath of French Air' into a stale market.

40

STARRAY.: Do you remember the classic Williams arcade machine, Defender? Logotron do. That's why they commissioned Steve Bak and Pete Lyon to bring it right up to date.

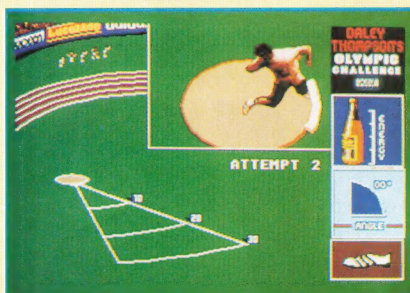
42

MORE REVIEWS

DALEY'S CHALLENGE:

With event after event of vigorous joystick waggling, athletics simulations have a reputation for being joystick wreckers, with little regard for the technique, tactics and skill of the sport. Apart from a highly developed waggling arm and an excuse to buy a new joystick, what do these games have to offer?

64



EMPIRE: What the Atari ST needs is a war game which will appeal to both the average game-player and the war simulation enthusiast. Perhaps Empire is the game which can finally break through the boredom barrier and put the thrill into strategy.

66

BOMBUZAL: Bombuzal is simple in concept, but difficult in practice: explode all of the 120 levels' bombs and mines, within the strict, allocated time-limit, whilst avoiding any patrolling meanies.

76

LANCELOT: Travel back to the Age of Chivalry when knights were bold, galloping across the countryside and rescuing damsels in distress. Dragons, Black Knights and mind-boggling puzzles lie in wait for you behind colourful graphic screens.

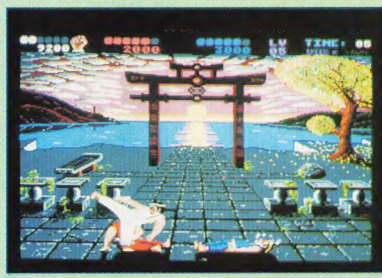
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FERNANDEZ MUST DIE: Imagework's third release involves fighting your way through a mad general's army. Does it offer anything new to what is an already crowded genre?

80

IK+: With its fists clenched and its left leg raised in a deadly kick, IK+ smashes its way onto the Atari ST - and how!

70



TETRA QUEST: On Earth, different countries have, for centuries, been competing against each other in sport. One day, we may transcend the universe, and I wonder whether we will compete against the inhabitants of other planets? Microdeal think it is possible!

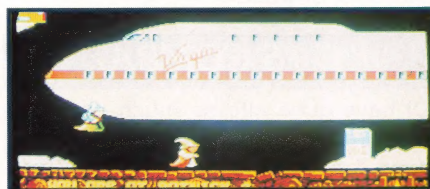
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WHERE TIME STOOD STILL: If you have ever seen those Doug McClure films on a Saturday morning and have wanted to beat up rubber dinosaurs whilst wiping the sweat out of your heroic blues eyes, you need wait no longer! Ocean and Denton Designs have brought to you the sequel Doug was too old to make.

82

SORCERY+: Taking you back to the dark ages, a time of feuding Necromancers and Wizards, Sorcery + pits you, the last, free Sorcerer, against the evil forces of the Necromancer.

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WHAT MORE?

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CREDITS

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ACTION NEWS

HELLBENT ON RELEASE

Those awfully nice chaps at Novagen have finally put down their brandy glasses and got down to business in order to release their third ST release, Hellbent, in time for Christmas. Programmed by newcomer to the team, Donovan Prince, the game is a vertical-scroller with plenty of action and super-fast scrolling. Graphics are by Mo Warden, who was previously responsible for Backlash's graphics. There are hints of Paul Woakes in the game, which probably explains why Damocles is taking so long to complete.



SET PHASERS TO STUN, SPOCK

Konix are soon to be releasing another joystick called the Navigator. Looking like something out of a 1960's sci-fi movie, it really defies description. Just look at the picture and see for your-



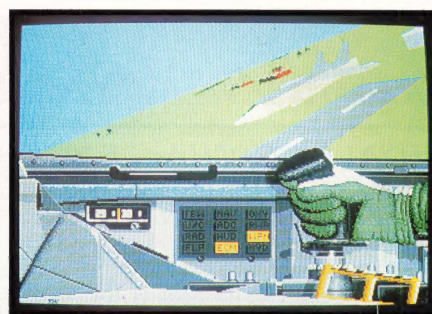
self. Available in November, the micro-switched joystick will set you back £14.99.

RED RAT DUO

Red Rat are releasing two arcade games in time for Christmas. Time Runner is basically a platform game with added extras, and Red Ace is set within an asteroid where you fight your way through hordes of defending aliens - does that sound a familiar scenario, or what?

F-16 COMBAT

DI have gone into so much depth to research F-16 Combat Pilot, they have managed to get the Chief Test



Pilot from General Dynamics to test-fly their new simulation. Bill Gunston, the famous military aircraft author, has written the introduction to the manual. The release is set to coincide with Mirrorsoft's 'other version', so flight sim fanatics could have a very busy Christmas.

ACTIVE CHRISTMAS

Active Distribution are living up to their name at the moment with no less than fifteen releases before Christmas. Active are one of the main marketing and distribution companies in the UK for French software houses. The hottest piece of news is that Coktel Vision have scooped the rights to the Walt Disney classic, Jungle Book.



Hotball, to be released at last.

This brilliant cartoon film is also being re-promoted by Disney this Christmas, so look out for the film at the cinema and the game on the software shelves at £24.95. Future titles from Coktel include Freedom, Emmanuelle, Terrific and Peter Pan, all at £19.95.

Satory are releasing Hotball, a four-player football game that comes complete with a four-player interface. Expect this game to be released at the end of October at a price of £24.95. Also from Satory is Reporter, a game without details as yet, but due for a November release. I'll keep you informed.

E.A.S. are on the point of releasing Zero Gravity, a game billed as a cross between tennis in space and pinball. Find the review in next month's ST Action. Finally, Lankhor are looking set to release G'nus, Vroom, Mechnic Warrior and Maupiti Island between October and December. Prices vary from £19.95 to £24.95.

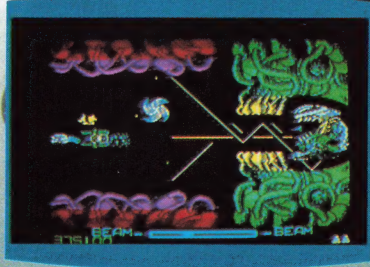
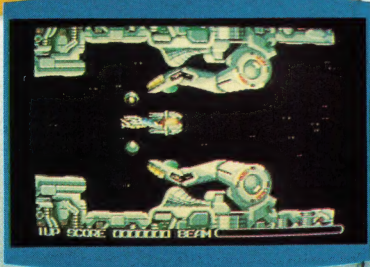
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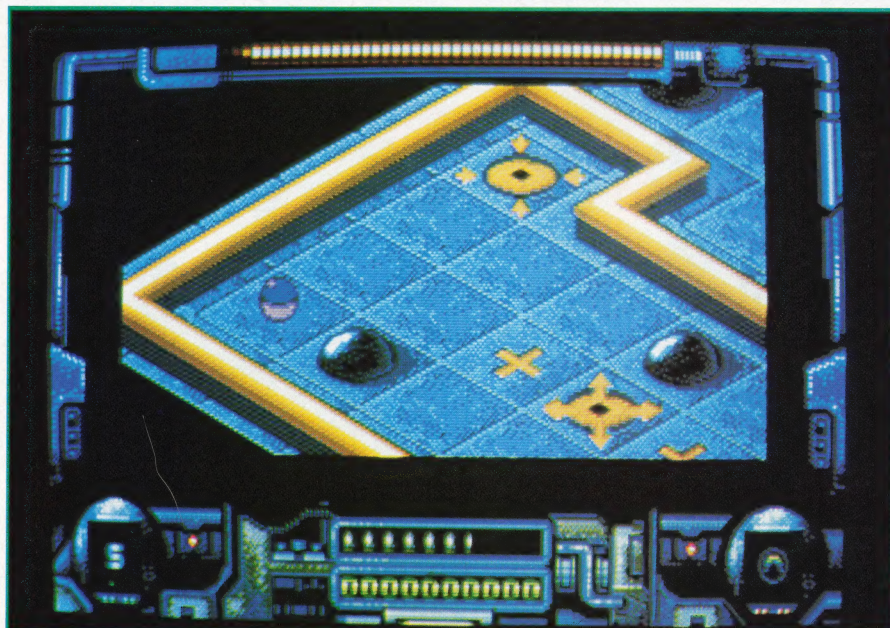


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(£24.99) and on Amiga (£24.99).

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LICENSED TO ELECTRIC DREAMS



(above) The Incredible Shrinking Sphere - a very pretty four - way scrolling marble game

Electric Dreams are putting the finishing touches to Incredible Shrinking Sphere. Having played the game at Software Studios, I can say that it is extremely addictive. There are also excellent graphics and the game is due out fairly soon. Look out for a review in next month's issue.

Activision's 'arcade sensation' Afterburner, is looking good and Argonaut are working hell-for-leather in order to complete on schedule. To whet your appetite, here's a screenshot of what they've achieved so far...

(below) No introduction needed - it's Afterburner, hot out of the arcades



Unfortunately, with the software houses being situated in France, there are difficulties getting screenshots to show you, but I hope to fix that next month.

NAM GAMES

Butcher Hill is another game set in Vietnam. By Gremlin, the game features three sections: a river section where you collect supplies and ammo; a jungle section spent travelling through a jungle maze littered

with mantraps and VC soldiers; finally, you encounter the village, your last obstacle before Butcher Hill. A release date is set for January.



(above) Butcher Hill - in the village - lob a grenade to clear your path.

DOUBLE ECLIPSE

Eclipse are releasing two budget games for the ST within the next month at a price of £14.95 each. Atax is a vertical-scroller in a fairly traditional mould - different weapons to collect and multiple levels with end-of-level baddies. However, when a vertical-scroller is a vertical-scroller



is a vertical-scroller, it's nice to see a realistic price applied to this game. Another budget game is Growth, a novel, mouse-operated game with quite an interesting game scenario. Watch out for reviews of both these games next month.

CRAZY CARS II

Crazy Cars, a game that sold quite well in spite of bad reviews, has given birth to a sequel. Crazy Cars II looks likely to dispel the bad name that its predecessor had with the press. Looking really good, it's a car-racing game with much improved graphics and animation, police speed traps

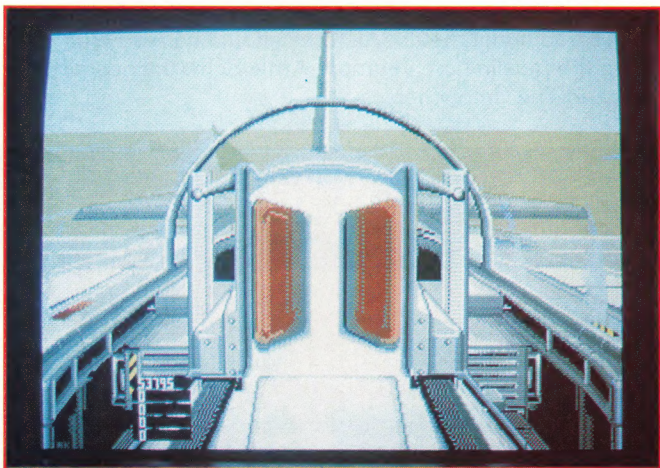


Crazy Cars II - looking very much better than No. 1

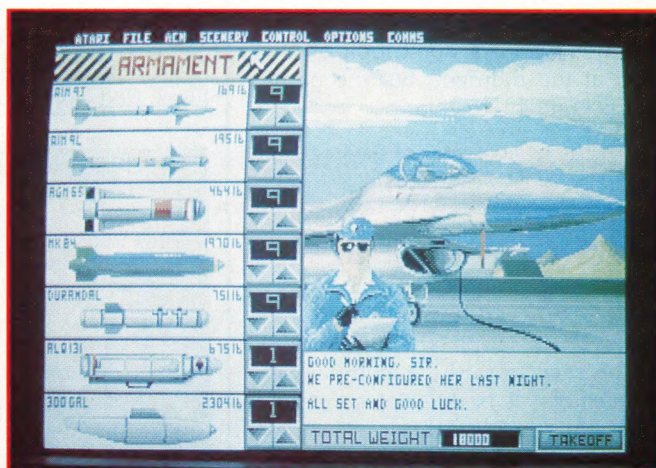
and cars that actually spin off the road and crash (rather than bounce up and down as in the former game). Price for this game will be £19.99.

FALCON

Falcon, from Spectrum Holobyte, is nearing completion on the ST. Receiving rave reviews on the PC AT at the moment, the ST version promises even more. Twelve ground-attack profiles, plenty of Migs to keep you company and an enlarged 'world', along with even smoother scrolling are all part of what promises to be one of the great flight sims. Available at the end of November for the horrendous cost of £29.99.



(above) Falcon - checking your six o'clock for bandits



(above) Falcon - choose your weapons

CHASE MANHATTAN

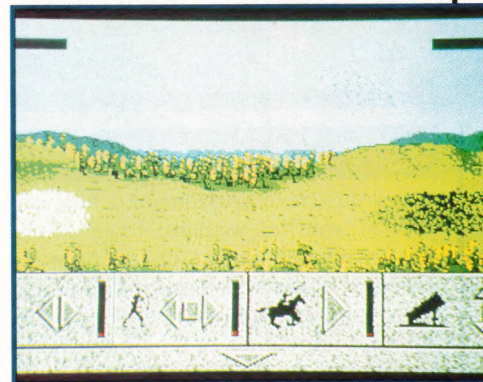
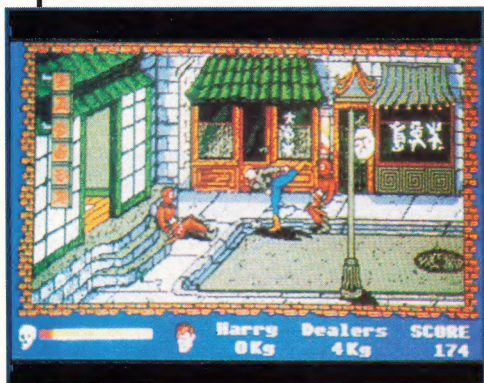
Following up last month's news item, a copy of Silmarils' Manhattan Dealers has arrived just too late for inclusion in this mag, but will be featured in next

month's issue. One of the better street combat games available, if you're into this genre then definitely one to check out at £19.99.

U.S. GOLD

Quite a few games on the test bench at the moment at the U.S. Gold offices in Birmingham. First off, however, is an incentive scheme for both dealers and consumers. If you belong to the U.S. Gold Club you'll get a 5% discount on any of their games at a U.S. Gold Star Dealer, as well as be in with a chance of winning special prizes, such as U.S. Gold T-shirts, sweatshirts and other goodies. The Star Dealers will also let you join the U.S. Gold Club for less money.

Anyway, back to the important news. Thunderblade is complete but for the final level, and Tiger Road, a martial arts game, is very playable and looking a good conversion. Joan of Arc is another arcade conversion



BARBARIAN II CLOSER

Yes, Barbarian II is finally nearing completion. Whatever else you may have read in other ST magazines, the ST version is not quite ready for review, but we have seen and played the first level and can report that it is as bloodthirsty and tasteless as its predecessor, if not more so. The sounds are bloodcurdlingly digitized and combine with much better graphics to make for a much improved sequel. Watch for the review next month.



Barbarian II really is much much more than just a sequel. These two screen shots show just two of dozens of different screens that you must tackle - each has it's own deadly opponent - anything from chickens, cavemen and colossal head biting dragons.

that Rainbow Arts are developing and has completely stunning graphics. One that we didn't manage to get screenshots of is The Deep. Yet another coin-op conversion, I played the game at U.S. Gold and agreed with Charles, their Software Development Manager, when he said that 'the graphics don't look all that good at the moment, but the game-play is quite interesting'.

SUPERMAN REVISITED

After seeing a short demo at the PC Show, Tynesoft's Superman has improved in leaps and bounds, as can be seen from the accompanying screenshots. It is due out sometime in November. Expect a review next issue as well as one of Circus Games.



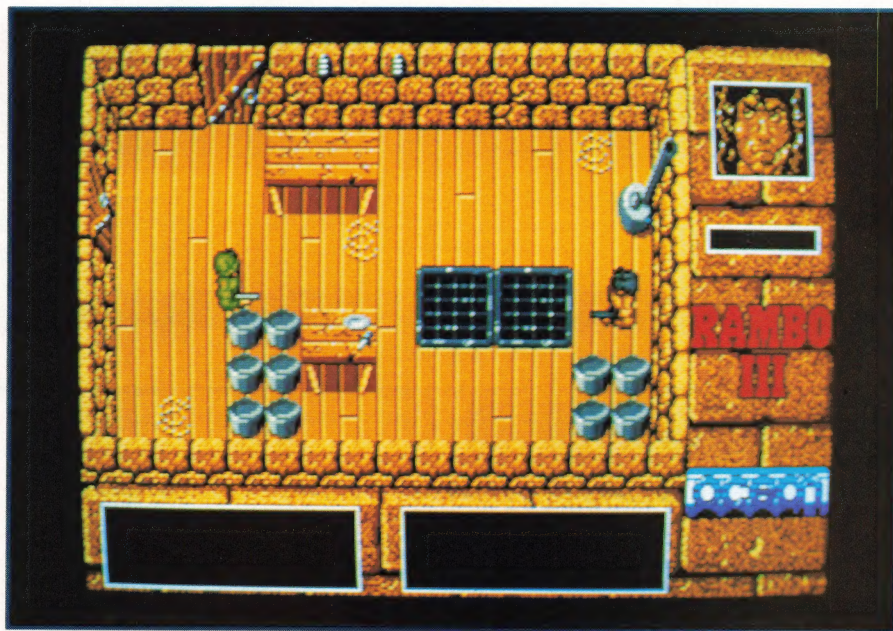
THALAMUS

Thalamus have announced a blitz on the ST market with no fewer than seven games under development. Quedex, written by Stavros Fasoulas, lets you control a metallic ball through ten planes of labyrinths, with an overhead view that allows you to see what's going on. Differing tiles affect the ball in various ways. Search for Sharla is an exploration adventure set across five moons with interactive characters. Bamboo, written by The Boys Without Brains, is a multi-level, 8-way scrolling, fantasy platform game with cartoon-like graphics. Xenodrome is in the early stages of development for a release in the new year and is a platform shoot-'em-up set on the moon.

Hunter's Moon is a 16-level, 'psychedelic shoot-'em-up' by Martin Walker. Armalyte is a simultaneous two-player, 8-level horizontal-scroller due for release at Christmas. Hawkeye, the well-known C64 game, is being converted to the ST. Another horizontal-scroller, it features perfect parallax scrolling, 12 levels and masses of fire-power. Finally, Sanxion, Thalamus' first release, is being converted to the ST. Believe it or not, it's yet another horizontal-scroller with all the features and

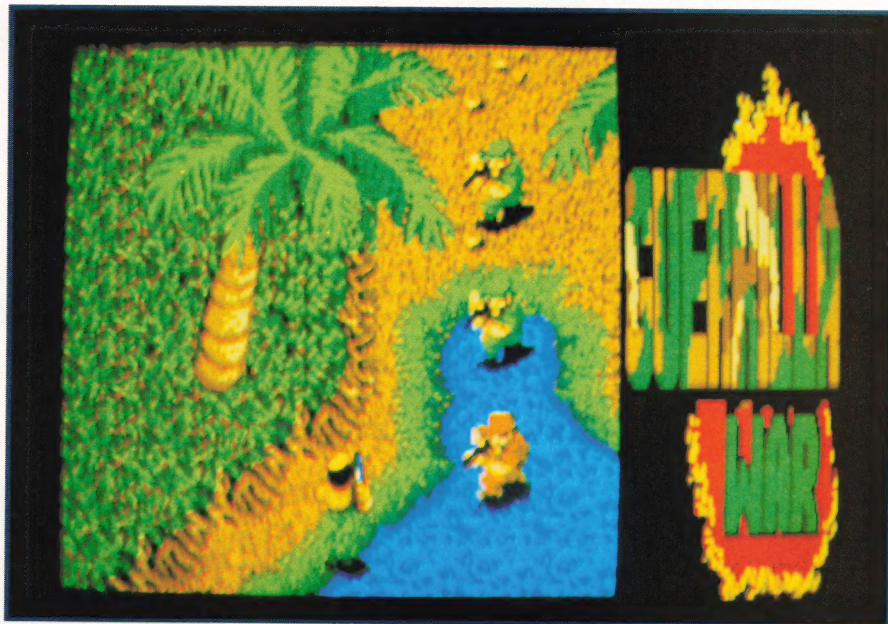
RAMBO III AND GUERRILLA WARS

Rambo III is developing nicely on the ST at Ocean, as is Guerrilla Wars. Rambo III is based loosely on the film and consists mainly of a look-down view similar to Eagle's Nest, but with better graphics and improved perspective. Guerrilla Wars is another vertical-scrolling arcade game with plenty of action as you set about blasting the baddies and rescuing the POW's. Victory Road, again, is a vertical-scroller in the more traditional mould. All three should be ready for Christmas. Other games in the pipeline are yet more Arnie Schwarzenegger films: Red Heat, Robocop and The Untouchables.



Rambo III - collect ammo and food without being disturbed by enemy guards

(Below) Guerrilla Wars - out for a day's shoot in the jungle



effects that this type of game employs.

escape from Earth and set up home on the planet, Genus 2, you must first

NEW BEGINNING FOR DOMARK

Domark are working on Trivial Pursuit II (A New Beginning) for release at Christmas. Based around the best-selling board and computer game, it takes the idea a step further. To



NIGEL MANSELL'S GRAND PRIX



"NIGEL MANSELL'S GRAND PRIX" is ready to take you and your computer into the fast lane of game excitement. As well as capturing the speed and adrenalin pumping danger of the world's greatest sporting spectacle, the game is the first racing simulation to reflect some of the enormous advances in car design and technology that have taken place recently.

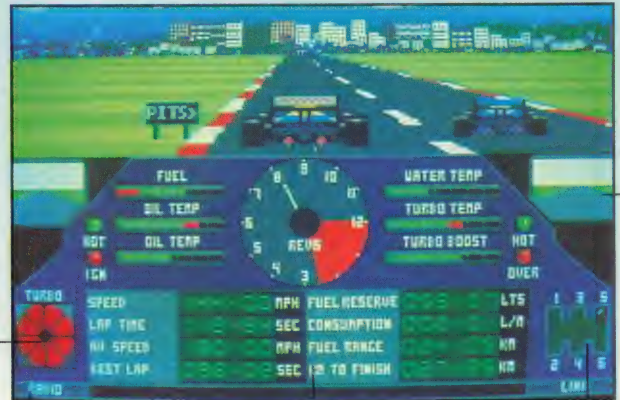
And yet the game still offers an excellent opportunity for even the most inexperienced novice to blast round the track at excessive speeds with the turbo on maximum boost and not a care in the world for fuel consumption, tyre wear or racing line. However, for those who know, or want to know a little more, there is an opportunity to race a selection of the world's greatest circuits in the quest for valuable championship points.

The red lights are on – *you snap into gear.*
The engine roars – *your grip tightens on the steering wheel.*
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900 brake horsepower is suddenly unleashed and the Williams hurtles to the first bend.
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**Nigel Mansell celebrating
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Your pit crew are
in constant contact
with you throughout
the race.

Correct gear –
selection is vital.

Use your Turbo for
extra power –
but watch that fuel.

This panel
gives you vital
information on your
race performance.

Wing mirrors. No
sign of the third
place car yet!



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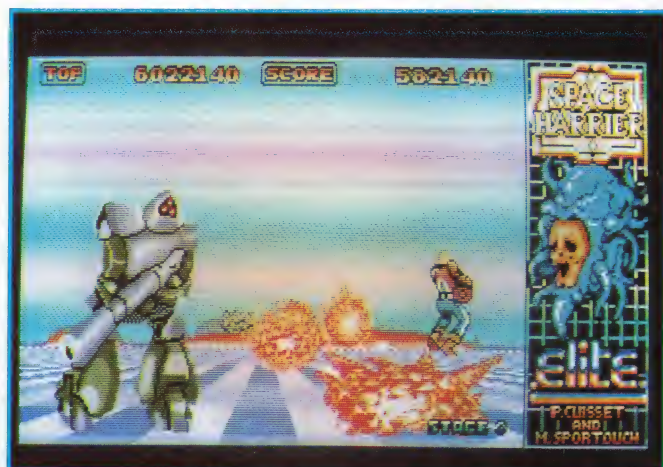
ALSO AVAILABLE ON

Spectrum 48/128	Cassette	£9.99
Spectrum +3	Disc	£14.99
Commodore 64/128	Cassette	£9.99
	Disc	£12.99
Amstrad CPC	Cassette	£9.99
	Disc	£14.99

ELITE/PAPER BOY/SPACE HARRIER II/GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

Elite are almost finished with Paper Boy, Ghosts and Goblins, Space Harrier II, Mike Read's Pop Quiz and A Question of Sport. Space Harrier II is basically more levels to add to the original game, which has already gained a reputation for being a faithful and playable conversion, while Paper Boy and Ghosts and Goblins are direct arcade

conversions and are looking quite interesting. The last time I saw Paper Boy, all that needed to be added was some cars in the road. Mike Read's Pop Quiz and A Question of Sport appear to be the same game with different questions and personalities. Watch out for plenty of reviews in the near future.



(above) Space Harrier II - New levels of excellence?



(above) Ghosts and Goblins a Ghostly arcade adventure

(Below) Previous Elite arcade conversion have been A1 - so far Paperboy only looks average.



OCEAN'S OPERATION WOLF

Just arrived at the last moment are some screenshots of Operation Wolf, Ocean's No.1 Christmas title. Huge sprites and nifty graphics are part of this game's initial interest, as can be seen. The original arcade machine's cabinet

sported an Uzi machine gun to kill the enemy, but us poor ST owners will have to make do with a mouse. It sports large sprites and some quite nifty graphical touches, and best of all, it will be out soon.





convince the powers that be that you have the necessary knowledge of Genus Trivia. Price of TP2 will be £19.95.

CASCADE ON FORM

Cascade's Form Master is for all of you who fancy a flutter on the gee-gees but would like to rely on more than just luck. Developed from a system that is over twenty years old, the program allows you to enter race data that the program will correlate and provide you with (hopefully) the winner of the 3.30 at Wincanton, etc.. Form Master will set you back a cool £99.99 but, if it works as they say it does, you'll easily recoup the expense. I think I'll stick with robbing banks - it's less risky...

TOP TEN SCORING GAMES IN THIS MONTH'S ST ACTION

1.	HOSTAGES	82%
2.	IK+	81%
3.	ELEMENTAL	76%
4=.	LANCELOT	75%
4=.	STARRAY	75%
6.	FISH	74%
7.	BOMBUZAL	73%
8.	EMPIRE	70%
9.	FINAL ASSAULT	69%
10=.	DALEY'S CHALLENGE	67%
10=.	WHERE TIME STOOD STILL	67%

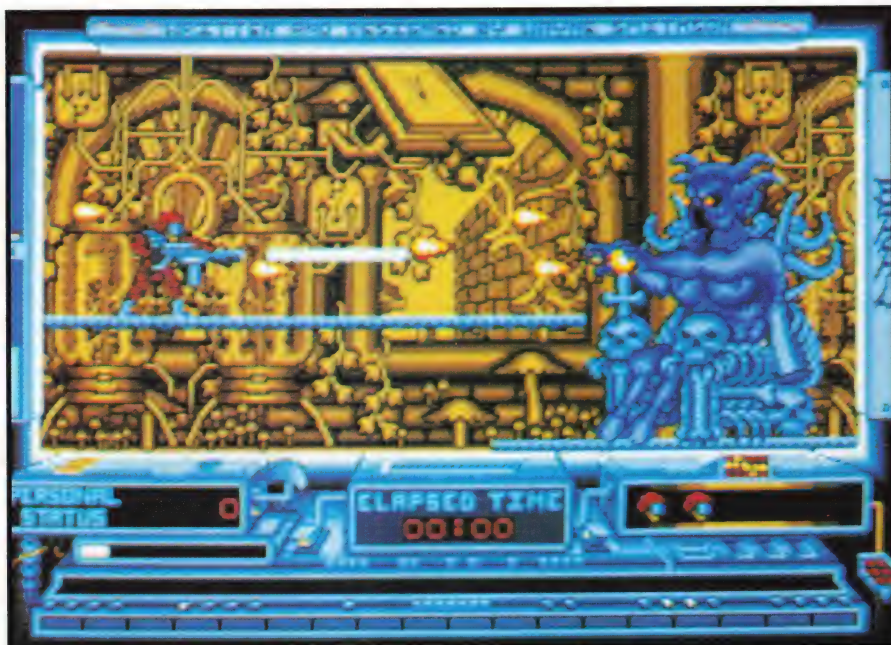
ALL TIME ST ACTION TOP FIVE SCORING GAMES

1.	NEBULUS	92%
2.	CARRIER COMMAND	91%
3.	DUNGEON MASTER	90%
4.	GAUNTLET II	88%
5.	STIR CRAZY	86%

STA

BAAL AND MENACE

Baal and Menace are two games from Psygnosis that are almost ready to hit the streets. As is usual with Psygnosis, the graphics on both games are splendid, with Menace just having the edge. Menace is a horizontal scroller in the style of R-Type and, quite apart from the amazing graphics, it features some red-hot gameplay. Baal, on the other hand, although still action-packed, is basically a platform game set in futuristic surroundings.



(above) Baal from Psygnosis - a platform game similar in style to Side-Arms

MASTERTRONIC RELEASE BUDGET TITLES

Mastertronic, now having joined forces with Virgin, are re-releasing some oldies at budget prices as well as some new titles at more normal (but more expensive) prices. Get Dexter, Rogue and Stormbringer are due for release around the beginning of November at a price of £9.99 each. Double Dragon, the arcade conversion is set for release on 10th November at a price of £19.99. War in Middle Earth, based on one of Tolkein's stories, will cost £24.99 and be released on 24th November.



Double Dragon - a beat'em-up with impressive graphics

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To grant a lot of readers their wishes, I am offering a Star Letter Prize of a game of their choice for the best letter printed each month. This month, Ian Drury from Diss takes the prize for Best Letter and the game of his choice will be on its way to him. So, keep those letters flooding in and, who knows, you might win a free game for the price of a first class stamp and a bit of thought in your letter-writing.

Too early for some

An excellent magazine. The product reviews, interviews and screenshots are of the best quality. The only complaint that I have (here it comes...) is that many of the games you review are not yet released. Of course, the blame lies with the software houses, but surely they must realise that when a game is advertised and reviewed, people want to buy it then, not six months later!

Robin Fisher
Mitcham

Don't give in

I was glad to read that in previous issues you have rejected ideas which have been suggested will 'improve your magazine' (a very hard task), e.g. a high-score table, game charts etc.. So far you have resisted, but please, please don't give in!

Just think, if you hadn't taken a firm stance, we would have had high-score tables and game charts and then the nightmare would really begin - play by mail columns, video and cinema reviews and (No, stop! I can't take any more) pen pal sections. Please keep up the good work.

Please could you answer some questions?

1) Is there any difference in performance between branded and unbranded disks?

2) Is it possible to buy an Afterburner poster (and other posters) from Mediagenic as shown in your Mediagenic interview?

Justin Wild
Whitworth

1) Yes, we have found in our office, often to our cost, that unbranded disks are more prone to corruption, thereby losing valuable data. If I had the choice I would definitely go for branded disks; a bit more expensive but worth the extra cost in peace of mind.
2) I chatted with Mediagenic and they said that a lot of people write in to them for a poster or two, so if you care to write to: Mediagenic, Blake House, Manor Farm Road, Reading, Berks, RG2 0JN, they'll send you an Afterburner poster.

Final screen complaint

I would like to congratulate the reviewers on doing such a good job - not too stingy and not being overly

The Letters Desk,
ST Action,
10 Theatre Lane,
Chichester,
West Sussex,
PO19 1SR

generous on the marks.

However, I do have one complaint (and it's not a small one at that). Why do you spoil the fun for everyone in showing the end screens of some of the games reviewed in your mag? For example, you showed us the finish of Out Run. One issue later in Gauntlet II you showed pictures of the rare dragon and, in issue 5, the review for Night Raider was spoiled by showing the sinking of the Bismarck. Is it just to show us how good the reviewers are on the games or is it a secret of some sort?

I would be very grateful if you would answer these questions as I feel quite strongly about this subject.

Mark Purslow
Marple

We do not wish to upset anyone, but neither do we wish to show boring screen shots. By illustrating interesting sequences or shots that help illustrate the gameplay, we think that they are of more use than the loading screen and shots taken during the first 30 seconds of the game.

Cheat disk in the offing?

I am a keen follower of Steve Merrett's "Giving the game away" column, and think the hints and tips he gives are excellent (the most comprehensive ST hints around!). However, the pokes produced by Mr Merrett's colleague, Mark Lawrence, tend to be somewhat long-winded. I often get lost while typing in his listings and wonder whether you have thought about releasing a cheat disk. I'm certain that I'm not the only reader who has problems with typing in the pokes!

On another note, I would also like to congratulate whoever is responsible for the layout of the mag. I find STA a joy to read and love the carefully thought-out screen shots. If STA continues to improve as it has done since issue one, I'm sure that Q-magazine will have to look to its laurels if it's to keep the title "Best magazine of the year"!

Silvia Farnsworth
Weston-Super-Mare

Discussions are taking place at the moment about the possibility of offering a 'Cheat disk'. I'll let you know as soon as anything happens. As for the layout of the mag, I'll let Greg, our Art Editor have the final word:

'Thanks very much'. (Greg gets all shy at times like this.)

Scottish, and proud of it

What I want to know is, what the reviewer in the Peter Beardsley Soccer review was talking about when he said, 'This may be the nearest WE shall get to playing in Europe again'.

It isn't just English people that read your magazine. The three other British teams can still play in Europe and even if England could play in Europe it wouldn't be worth their while judging by their performance in Germany.

P.S. Like the mag.

**Gary Campbell
Denholm
Scotland**

Stop buying the dross

The quality of some software around at the moment is total dross; as soon as the software houses start writing games that use all the ST's potential the better. Someone out there must be buying the rubbish; why don't they read the reviews for the game before buying it because of its flashy packaging?

**Barry Brierley
RAF Innsworth**

Multiple entries

I am writing to enquire about multiple entries on competitions. I have been doing the competitions and putting all of them in one envelope marked 'competitions' instead of sending each in a separate envelope. Is this alright?

Also, I wondered if I could photocopy the competition entry forms, as cutting out the entry form spoils the magazine? If not, then please could you put the competitions on the back of advertisements as I had to cut up my Starglider II review in the October issue.

**Niels Gudegast
Marple**

Sending all your entries in one envelope does not cause any hassles for us, and it saves you a lot of postage! As for photocopying forms, we'd prefer it if you sent the original forms, but we don't really mind. However, be warned! All of us at ST Action have sharp eyesight, and can spot a person entering more than once from thirty paces. We once had one person trying to enter nearly a dozen photocopies for the same competition! They went in the bin...

Conversion blues

Firstly, thanks for a great magazine! I certainly think

ST Action represents great value for money. What other publication can you get in full colour with over 80 pages for a paltry £1.30?

However, enough of this grovelling talk. The reason for my letter is to ask why the major software producers insist on constantly churning out the same old drivel? Surely, the majority of games players are becoming a little tired of all these "arcade conversions", I certainly am! Take U.S. Gold for instance, their advert in your September issue related to ten titles, only one of which was not a conversion!

Why, too, do you insist on visiting only the large companies for your 'company profiles'? Surely, smaller, independent companies who produce what must now be termed "alternative" games would be equally interesting, if not more so.

Maybe you could pass on these thoughts to the likes of U.S. Gold. I'm sure we'd all like to hear their reply.

**Norman Winstanley
Macclesfield**

I talked with U.S. Gold and they said that after extensive market research, the games that were most popular were, believe it or not, arcade games. It's down to that old saying: 'Supply and demand'. If the demand is there, which it still is, then the arcade conversions will continue to roll off the production line. Besides, Grandmother looking for a game to buy little Jimmy for Christmas is more likely to go for a licence game that has a well-known title than some obscurely-named strategy game.

Cumana vs. Gauntlet II & Virus

In issue 5 there was a magnificent article about the four-player joystick interface. I read the article and came up with the following sentence. I quote: 'Gauntlet II works on all models of ST from the oldest to the newest and on all types of drive.' This is rubbish! I recently bought Gauntlet II as well as Virus, from Firebird. So I put the disk in my beautiful Cumana disk drive and, you've already guessed it, it didn't work. I tried all possible ways to get the thing loaded, but the game just refused to load. My luck did not change when I tried to load Virus.

I went back to my dealer (80 miles away) and we examined the drive and came to the conclusion that both games don't work on Cumana drives. The

dealer returned my cash and there was no harm done, but I still cannot play the two games! I personally prefer Cumana drives over Atari drives because they make less noise and are more reliable. The last thing I will do is buy another drive just to play Gauntlet II; maybe someone knows of a solution?

Luigi Casula
Deventer

I've been speaking to Cumana, U.S. Gold and Telecomsoft on this problem. Cumana say that the two games write to areas beyond the specification of the drive units, e.g. writing with varied sectors and up to 82 tracks. Both U.S. Gold and Telecomsoft refute this, saying that both games access only tracks 0-79.

U.S. Gold said that the speed of the stepper unit within the Cumana drive was slower than the Atari model (as did Telecomsoft) and this was what caused the first batch of Gauntlet II games to play up. The second batch of games (and all batches since) have been amended to work on Cumana drives. The way to check if you have a new Gauntlet II disk is that, on the loading screen, the background changes colour instead of staying black as in the first batch. Take the game back to your dealer and see if he will exchange it for a later version; if not, return it to U.S. Gold and they will send a later version.

With Telecomsoft, they said that, again, it was only their first batch that did not work and the later versions are compatible with all drives. The way to tell the age of the disk is as follows: the old version has a date on the back of the disk whereas the later versions do not have a date. Again, if you have the earlier version and it doesn't work send it back to Telecomsoft and they will replace it. One point that I must stress, however, is that in both cases, no changes have been made in the game, only the loading code has been updated.

Sound advice

I am thinking about buying an ST for MIDI music and games. The Atari has inbuilt MIDI ports which is excellent for the music side. However, what is the sound like on the computer? Is the sound better than the Spectrum (bearing in mind they both have the same sound chip)?

David Prescott
Catford

The sound is of a reasonable quality. It is better than the Spectrum on account of the better speaker in the ST. However, if you use the ST for music, you'll plug your keyboards, etc. into a proper P.A system, so the ST's sound chip will not be used.

Yer reads the mag, yer takes yer choice

I am probably what would be politely termed one of

your more 'mature' readers, being a youthful forty-one years old (who said that? I'm sure I heard someone mutter 'geriatric'). I decided a while back to buy an Atari ST and I'm absolutely delighted with it. Obviously, being in the market for software, I bought your magazine and must applaud you on the content. Having read your appraisal of many offerings in the current issue, it is patently obvious that the cost of the magazine can be saved many times over simply by avoiding a lot of the overpriced games with little or no content. This, I feel, is especially true for many youngsters who have to save pocket money long and hard for such games, and then end up disappointed with the results.

Having said that, you most eloquently point us in the direction of software well worth the money, and already my cheque book is cowering in anticipation!

I am not a great arcade fan, but I am an avid adventure fan, and recently purchased 'Defender of the Crown' and 'Time and Magik'. I have finished 'Lords of Time' but I'm sure that is old hat by now.

Keep up the good work.

Ian Drury
Diss

Thank you. A game of your choice is on its way.

The return of Garfield

Being a great fan of Garfield, I broke the golden rule and bought the game before reading the reviews. Not only is the game very easily completed but it is also prone to crashing, hence this letter. Could you please print the address of 'The Edge'? I could then return my copy of the disk to them for replacement. Okay, so I have wasted £20 on this very simple game. We all make mistakes, but I resent paying £20 for a piece of bad programming. I think all software houses should print their addresses on the packaging.

Graeme Dolderson
Dronfield

The Edge's address is:

*The Edge
36-38 Southampton Street
Covent Garden
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Amiga Version



C64 Version



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MicroProse are as well known for the larger-than-life figurehead of Major 'Wild Bill' Stealey as they are for their realistic combat simulations. Martin Moth reports on the 'gung-ho-er than thou' attitude that pervades the company.

MICROPROSE

MicroProse is a name that is renowned as a software simulation company par excellence. Silent Service, F-15 Strike Eagle and Gunship are just a few simulations that continue to sell well to this day because of the depth of play that is involved - none of the so-called 'three month cycle' that other software companies work on. This strategy has its roots deep within the *MicroProse* infrastructure. Each project can take

before *MicroProse* that earned him the moniker 'Wild Bill' and which has a profound effect on the type of simulations that *MicroProse* put out today - flying.

'I started my flying career in the U.S. by going to the Air Force Academy. Unfortunately, I wore glasses which, at first, excluded me from any military flying. However, I did rather well at the Academy and so persuaded the 'powers that be' to let me go flying, and I spent five years teaching flying to other people. So there's around two hundred officers around the world that started off their flying career with Major Bill. However, it was Lieutenant Bill at the time. I was a T-37 instructor pilot for about five years and then they said "Why don't you go fly the C-5A Galaxy?" Now the C-5 is a wonderful airplane but the passengers didn't like it when I tried to roll the 'plane. You're not really supposed to roll them but I was always trying! It was a great time - I got lots of flying in and I visited hundreds of places around the world, primarily all around Europe and the Far East.'

'However, I decided that I wanted to fly solo so I left and joined the Air National Guard. In the Air National Guard I was a Forward Air Controller, or FACs. They gave me a little Cessna Skymaster and loaded up the wings with white phosphorous rockets and our job was to go in and be expendable. We had to draw the fire. Once we saw where the fire was coming from, they'd send in the big jets and they'd go and get them. So I said, "Wait a minute! Let me get this straight. You're telling me that I'm expendable?"'

'They said, "Yeah, you're a cheap airplane". I said, "Sure, but I'm not cheap." So we'd fly around at fifty to a hundred feet and look for targets. We'd find one, roll in on it, launch a smoke rocket and tell the big guys to watch for the smoke at a certain coordinate and then go bomb hell out of it. I was still teaching this stuff to newly-qualified pilots down at Fort Atari. It's real name was Fort Erwin, Pennsylvania and it was basically a vast, 1000 square mile range where they have tanks, APCs and other targets and there'd be lasers on both aircraft and ground targets and everyone would shoot at each other with these lasers. That's how it got the name Fort Atari - it was just one big shoot-'em-up. Soon after that, we transitioned onto the A-37, a twin-



The MicroProse team at Tetbury along with a cardboard 'Wild' Bill.

up to five man years to complete - a lot of money in anyone's terms and which requires a large unit sale to recoup costs. All this reflects the policy of Bill Stealey and Sid Meier, the two founders of *MicroProse*, to give consumers more than 'just a game'; they wanted to give the consumer the chance to sample on computer a little bit of reality, to give users the chance to make their own decisions, be they right or wrong, then deal with the consequent effects that each decision makes to the game.

Bill Stealey

Bill Stealey is the main reason *MicroProse* exists. It was he, along with systems analyst, Sid Meier, that started the company, and behind the brash, gung-ho personality that has become Bill's trademark, lies a business brain of considerable experience. I started Bill talking about his career



Major 'Wild Bill' Stealey with his pride and joy, Miss MicroProse.

engine 300/400 knot jet with smoke rockets and Mk 82 bombs, and did exactly the same job but at three times the speed - it was just brilliant.'

'When I left, I started working as a management consultant in New York for five years and my initiation into simulations was as a result of writing a computer simulation of a marketing plan for a client. Now I like smart lazy people - people who find a way of getting the job done without having to bust a gut in the process. So, instead of writing out huge reports and spending days over a calculator, etc., I wrote this marketing model and took the results to my client. He said, "Fine, Bill, but there's just a few things that need altering here and there." So I went away, punched some new data into the computer and came back two hours later with the finished, modified report and this guy was flabbergasted; he'd thought I'd be away for two weeks working on the alterations. We used that model for about five years and it really demonstrated the power of simulation.'

'I left the management consultancy to go to one of my clients, a computer firm in the computer systems service business. At that time I had a few extra dollars from selling my house so I became one of the first Atari VCS owners. I mean, I remember standing in line for the Superman cartridge way back when that came out. From that I progressed to an Atari 800 and was shown a game that was just out called Star Raiders. I

played that game to death. During 1982 I got to know Sid Meier, the local Atari 800 'guru'. He was not a programmer, but a systems analyst and a great mathematician. We really got talking when we went out to Las Vegas and played the Red Baron arcade game together. Sid told me that he could write a better game in a week and that's when we did Hellcat Ace. That was the start of the **MicroProse** hallmark where you had to make real decisions and think hard about events that might affect the outcome of the game and not just 'left, right, blast.'

'We found that other people liked our game too - "Holy Mackerel, I think we have a business!" I never thought that **MicroProse** would be a full-time business. Sid and I put down a couple of thousand dollars, took out an advert in an American

Atari magazine called Antic in December '82. The business plan was to sell Atari 400/800 software through the mail and if we sold fifty pieces a month we'd be happy. Somebody rang up and ordered five HUNDRED pieces! I was flabbergasted. The thing was, I didn't know what to charge him. The guy called up, spoke to my wife (the 'business' phone was in the living room) and ordered 500 Hellcat Aces. So she told him they were \$29.95. He then informed her that that price was retail price and that he was a distributor and wanted them at 'trade' price. She had no idea what a distributor was, so he explained what a distributor was, what credit was, etc.. She then phoned me at work (because I still had a normal job at the time) and explained all these things to me. This enabled me to go back to the distributor and negotiate a price. Every week that guy came back and ordered another 500 units.'

'We sold 50,000 Hellcat Aces... in 'Baggies'! Baggies are an American name for freezer bags that you put meat in in the refrigerator. The game was packaged in



MicroProse' first game - Hellcat Ace.

Baggies and the instructions were printed by my little Epson computer! The first big order came in February 1983 from the UK. Somebody phoned up and ordered \$20,000 worth of games! I couldn't believe it, so he sent me the cheque, it cleared and we went and got some more Baggies. All my kids were sitting round the table stuffing Hellcat Ace cassettes into Baggies. That's when I decided that **MicroProse** could become a full-time business. It was January 1984 when I quit my job and started working for **MicroProse** for the first year without pay. We also had to mortgage the house, and as my wife was a nurse, she went out to work to help support us during that year. Here we are today, six years later, with **MicroProse** having about a hundred and fifty employees and offices in Baltimore in America, Tetbury in the UK, Paris, Frankfurt and Tokyo.'

Stewart Bell

Stewart Bell is the Managing Director



Stewart Bell alongside Bill Stealey in Miss MicroProse.

of **MicroProse** UK, based in Tetbury, Gloucestershire, a small town not normally associated with high-flying software companies. I chatted with Stewart about various things, but was initially interested in how he came to work for Major Bill.

'Before I joined **MicroProse**, I was working for a company called Kennedy running their sales operations in Europe. They were a division of Alleganey International that made magnetic tape drives. We were doing quite well and the corporate life was wonderful with loads of perks that you get from being in a large company. However, in some convoluted way that even I can't remember now, I met this guy called Bill Stealey. I immediately warmed to the guy but, as most people know, Bill's ego is fairly large, so I ploughed my way through it and he started talking about wanting me to join **MicroProse**. Now at the time I had a nice secure job, reasonable money and I was happy in what I was doing, so I thought, "Do I really need this?" But we sat down together and started to play a game that was just out, called Silent Service, and I really enjoyed it. At the time I was heavily into Infocom adventures; I'm still stuck on Mind Forever Voyaging. Anyway, I met Bill sometime later and he was still keen on getting me to work for him, so I went over to Baltimore and struck up a deal. I started working for **MicroProse**, with my back bedroom serving as the UK offices, two years ago. After a couple of months it started to snowball and,



The MicroProse offices in Tetbury on a wet day in October.

wherever you looked in my house, there were **MicroProse** games. So we moved to Tetbury in Christmas of '86.'

'Origin came along soon after as we had an expensive, very able, staff and we looked for ways of sharing our ability and also sharing our belief in the European market. We went out looking for companies that had a similar belief in their product, because whatever you say about **MicroProse** products, they're good and we are 100% behind them. That's difficult to say these days as there are companies that do not care what they do as long as they make money. Origin had the same outlook as us, so we took them on.'

I questioned the decision to be based in Tetbury, when so many software houses were based in large cities, such as, London, Birmingham and Manchester.

'Why not? I had the same conversation with Bill two years ago where I explained that Tetbury is the software distribution capital of Europe! I mean, there's five pubs within thirty-five seconds of the front door, I live just six miles down the road and there's the M5 and M4 nearby. There's also a lovely quality of life down here that you just don't get in big cities. The only problem we do have is with young programmers. We've not been successful in getting programmers to move to Tetbury.'

Would this difficulty have anything to do with the fact that the house prices in the Tetbury area are some of the highest in the country? I asked.

'It might well be, but

we've solved the problem by flying them all out to the States. They have the life of Riley - we've got some condominiums and flats out there with swimming pools and jacuzzis. They get cash-in-hand and a car. They are also right next door to a Varsity house which is attached to the local college. There's an awful lot of Cheerleaders about, but we won't go into that... We take the guys over there to program Spectrum and ST software. We have to have European programmers for the ST because the ST really hasn't done all that well in the States.'

'Unfortunately, we have stopped giving our support to the Atari 8-bit machines, which is a great shame as I bought one of these at a Compec show about seven years ago. It was my very first computer and I saw this game called Star Raiders and that did it for me. I spent something like £860 on an Atari 400 with disk drive, which was a lot of money then and I was hooked. The pure and simple reason why we stopped supporting the 8-bit Ataris is because there is so much piracy in it - you sell one and the whole market's gone; you really sell very few overall. Our products suffer less on the whole because of the incredible detail that we put into the manual cannot simply be copied onto another disk. However, the games take so long and so much effort and money to write, if people pirate the games then we will not be able to put as much money into the next product and so standards would ultimately decline. That is the real damage that software pirates do to the industry.'

'One really interesting new venture for us is **MicroProse** Games, where we will be producing coin-ops. Gene Lipkin, the founding President of Atari Corp., left Atari two years ago and has been doing various bits and pieces since then. He has just set up **MicroProse** Games and will be bring-



Part of the huge software warehouse in Tetbury.

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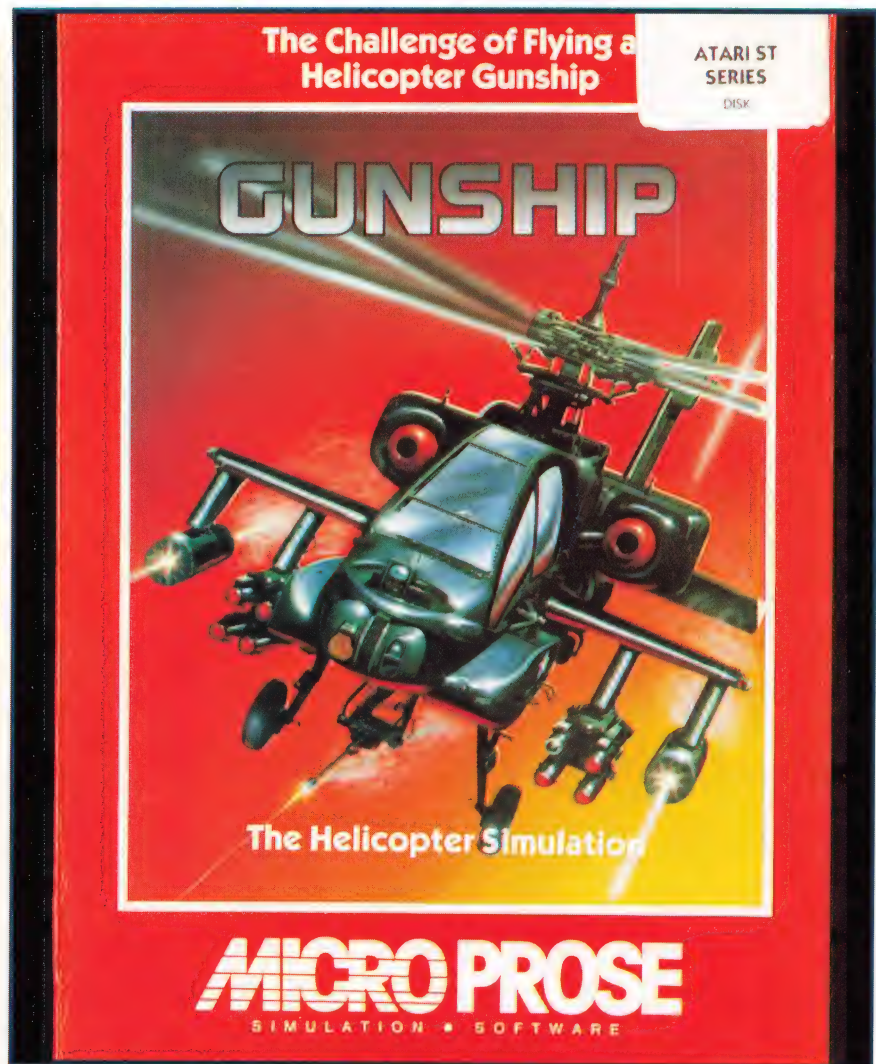
ing out two coin-ops which will be very specialized with incredible graphics and sound, special consoles and a whole lot more besides. Both machines will be simulations and there have been some rumours as to what the resulting games will be. However, Bill's a flyer and he's bound to want an arcade machine in his basement where he can fly around, so I guess it's a pretty safe bet that at least one will be a flight simulation. Both these machines will be demonstrated next year at the Amusement Trade Association Show at Olympia.'

One point that I put to Stewart was that, to date, the graphics on their games have been acceptable, but nothing special.

'All that is about to change. A simulation that we're working on at the moment and which was previewed at the PC Show, is F-19 Stealth Fighter. This game really needs to be seen to be believed. At the moment it is on the powerful PCs, but will be flying onto the STs' screens in the New Year. This is a real breakthrough for us as, previously, *MicroProse* simulations have been 75% artificial intelligence and 25% the graphics. Hellcat Ace did not have the best graphics in the world, but the gameplay was there in abundance. However, we are now able to incorporate better graphics into our games thus making them even more realistic.'

'We have opened offices in France and in Germany. The office in France is there to sell things; the office in Germany is to fight the German government all the time, as we seem to have a constant war on our hands with them banning most of our games! I think we have finally got them with our latest game under development, a soccer game. We can't think of a way that the German government can ban us for that, although they may think the sliding tackle might be a bit violent. We understand their philosophy about violence, but what concerns us is that they seem to single us out in particular. Whatever we bring out gets banned, so we're hoping to change things with *MicroProse Soccer*.'

'Okay, other companies' games also get the chop, but what I can't fathom out is exactly why our games get banned. Fine, in *Barbarian* you can chop people's heads off and see blood spurt out of



the neck, but *Gunship*'s different. It really hurts if you've clocked up a couple-of-hundred hours on active combat duty, and all of a sudden a Russian missile comes up and knocks you out of the sky. It's not just shooting people and gunsmoke, it's a real experience, where you have to learn about flying and about what's going on. As a matter of interest, *Gunship* is used in physiological training of pilots by the U.S. Army. They wire the pilots up and measure their pulse rate and blood pressure when playing *Gunship*.'

'An air-combat term that sums up what we try and instil in our games is 'situational awareness' - being aware of things happening around you that might influence the decisions you ultimately make.'

ST4

Gunship - Used for physiological training by the U.S Air Force

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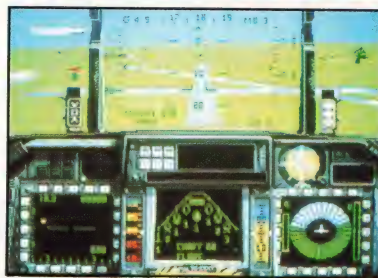


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COMPILATIONS COMPILED



'The emergence of software compilations at Christmas time is as inevitable as rain, long-winded Woolworth TV commercials and the Perry Como show!' Jason Spiller reviews six 'bargain bundles' from various companies, questions the ethics behind the software compilation and discovers how this may benefit the ST user.



'You look like the sort of person who knows a bargain when you see one... forty-seven super games for the price of one!' Let us not be deceived by the function of the software compilation. It is a marketing vehicle which enables software companies to breathe new life and credibility into failing products, and with the sacrifice of one or two best sellers in the 'bumper bundle', they are usually very popular. The compilation idea is quite ethical and works particularly well with all styles of music - the ever-popular 'Now That's What I Call Music' collection is a good example. But because there is only a token representation from each artist in these compilations, this does not damage the sales of their respective products. This is not so with

accordingly, software companies exercise integrity rather than unscrupulousness - or do they? Now, the unbeatable bargain bonanza syndrome has gone sixteen-bit, with the majority of the larger distributors making full use of this opportunity.

The high price of ST software today compensated for the time when there were few users of the machine, so at least it would recoup the money from development, even at its lowest predicted sales potential. But internationally, the ST is now one of the best selling computers and so surely the price should be reduced in accordingly. However, the average price of a game is still £20.00, which is more than twice as much as full-



software! Compilations are unpopular with retail software outlets, because the shelf-life of the individual games ends abruptly. Having bought the software at full trade price and with no-sale-or-return agreement, does the retailer reduce the price of the games and absorb the loss?

With a profit margin of 30%, how could he possibly compete?

During the eight-bit boom, software was being released at a terrific rate and compilations became lucrative business. One company was quick to see the potential, bought the copyrights to old titles from various companies and produced the popular Beaujolly compilations - (I review their latest sixteen-bit collection in this supertest). Today, we are led to believe that the market has matured, the average computer user is no longer a 'Joe Sixpack' in search of bargains and,



price eight-bit software. Bearing in mind that a best selling game priced at £24.95 could gross £250,000, it is little wonder that software companies can afford extravagant public relations stunts! Controlled correctly, the software compilation could actually reduce the

cost of games to a more realistic price, which would end the legal, but unscrupulous extortion racket that software companies have been enjoying. Of course, this will increase the plight of the poor retailer, but that is a problem for the software houses, distributors and retailers to sort out.

Eight compilations from various companies are under review in this Megatest and they will be assessed on each individual game as well as the mix and variety of the whole package.



Five Star - Ocean (£24.95)

Five Star - State of the Art! That's what Ocean are calling their compilation! The stars of this Ocean spectacular are zany car racing in Crazy Cars, city wrecking in Rampage, hack'n'slaughter in Barbarian, corner-hugging bike action in Enduro Racer and.... planet painting in Wizball?



Barbarian

It doesn't take long to see why Barbarian was banned in Germany! Two warriors armed with broad swords meet in a forest and set about hacking each other to death. The computer controls one barbarian and you are given little time to master the crude art of barbarism. With various joystick and firebutton combinations, your warrior chops and hacks his way to victory and there are no less than sixteen offensive and defensive moves. When sword makes contact with flesh, crimson gore spurts from the wound and the blow is registered on a hit indicator. Your barbarian can endure twelve hits before dropping to his knees and being kicked in the face by an over-zealous computer-controlled opponent. However, either warrior can be killed outright by decapitation and a lizardman lurches on screen, drags the body off, and kicks the head into the undergrowth - subtle stuff! The joystick controls are direct and responsive and the game-play is magnificent. Admittedly, Barbarian is gratuitously violent but I can't imagine that it will incite people to hack each other to death with broadswords. Terrific two-player action!

Crazy Cars

Take a Porsche, a Ferrari, a Mercedes, and a Countach, place them on a stiped and undulating road and watch them bounce about uncontrollably. That's what Titus did when they created the most irritating Outrun rip-off since Manhattan Chaser. Miles and miles of striped track await you as you race against the other four cars, and if you crash, your car bounces up in the air accompanied by a comical 'boing' sound effect. The aim of the race is to complete a section of the track before the time expires in order to qualify for a more expensive car, which culminates in the ultimate Ferrari GTO. A nice interpretation of the cars, but the bouncing around is ridiculous and the long and striped track is an effective soporific.

Enduro Racer

Hang on to your handlebars for arcade smash, Enduro racer. This is a race against time across a variety of ter-

rains, which rigorously tests your joystick as you wrench it forward to open up the throttle and back to wheelie over ramps and rocks. There are five stages to the race and any time you have gained is added on to the next stage. The joystick controls could have been more responsive and the fact that you can just ride through the computer-controlled bikes without crashing or slowing down is a silly oversight.

Rampage

After eating some dodgy hamburgers, three people turn into fifty-foot B-movie monsters and start wrecking cities. Up to three players can participate in the game, each controlling Godzilla, King Kong or Wolfman. Joystick controls are rather woolly as you attempt to climb and demolish buildings in order to get the juicy humans inside. Rampage deserves full marks for originality, but it is totally lacking in arcade action.

Wizball

The spectrum has been eliminated from the planet Wiz and the landscape has been rendered dull and grey. Your task is to manoeuvre a strange green ball called Catelite around the planet and restore the colour to Wizworld. The ball bounces off every obstacle and you must avoid a constant swarm of aliens as you bounce your spherical protege across the planet and down craters to the underworld. There are a number of icons to collect which beef up Catelite's firepower. The key to returning colour to Wizland is to eliminate the aliens who turn into green bubbles which then activate other weaponry. Additionally, green and blue droplets which must be collected and stored in cauldrons at the base of the screen. The colour must be fully restored in each level in order to complete the game. Wizball is a strange, but pleasing and absorbing game. There is something quite satisfying about returning colour to a drab and grey planet.

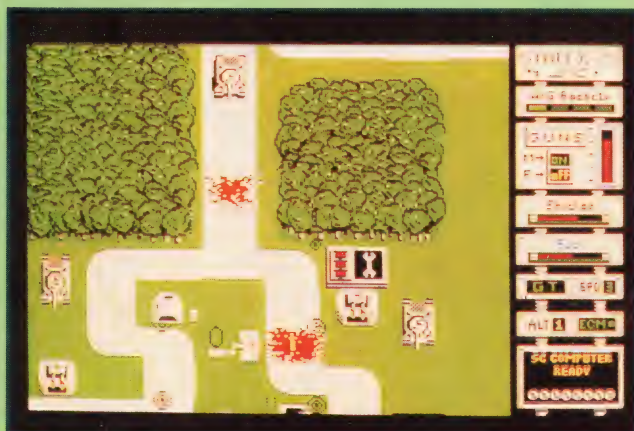


Summary

With the exception of Rampage and Crazy Cars, this compilation contains some of the most commercially popular games of the past two years. Barbarian has excellent two-player participation, Wizball is constructive fun, and Enduro Racer is still the most exciting bike-racing game available on the ST.

Tri-Action 1 - Prism (£19.99)

There are two Tri-Action packs to fill your Christmas stocking, courtesy of Prism Leisure. We begin with Tri-Action 1, which simply consists of three different types of arcade-style games.



Fireblaster

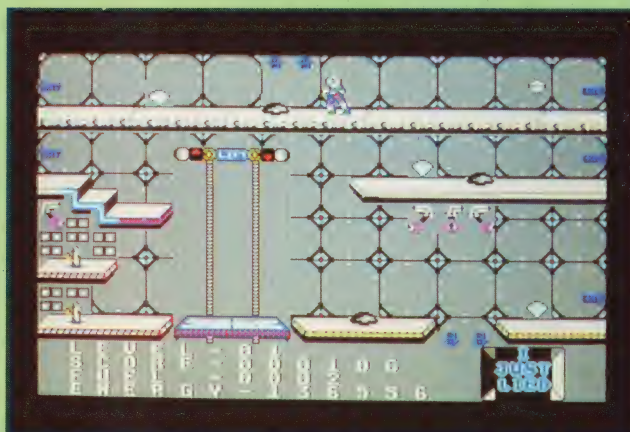
Ludicrously described by its creators as: 'The ultimate shoot'em-up', Fireblaster is one of the simplest and least taxing games to be released on the ST market. Inspired by Phoenix, the game consists of blasting level after level of nasty aliens who attack in various formations and adopt a variety of movements. 'Piloting' your super little space craft, you can move all around the screen, dodge the fire and blast the little blighters with rapid pressing of the firebutton. By way of an introduction, the first alien contingents enter the arena unarmed, swirl around and fly naively and conveniently into the path of your laser. Total elimination takes seconds - end of level 1! Level 2 begins in earnest with a more violent breed of space dweller, who adopts a less uniformed attack and fires lasers. The game gets progressively more difficult with each successive level introducing a nastier class of alien. Your only salvation from the plodding predictability of the game is the occasional docking vessel where you can gain an extra life or enhance your weaponry to a double cannon. There is no conclusion to the game and you will run out of patience long before you run out of aliens to blast.



Warzone

The inspiration for this game was obviously the Sega hit, 'Spy Hunter'. The screen shows an overhead view of a scrolling landscape and the game amounts to manoeuvring a small vehicle across a variety of military-active terrains. The opposition attempt to halt your progress

with tanks, gun emplacements and helicopters and your only defence is a fore-mounted cannon which is activated by pressing the firebutton. Because of the small scale of game, the vehicle has to be manoeuvred the full width of the screen before it scrolls to reveal more terrain; therefore, missiles are often fired from unseen sources off screen. Your weaponry can be beefed-up by collecting so-called Beta Flux Bombs and your progress relies on keeping gas in the tank by collecting fuel pump icons which are conveniently scattered around. Warzone certainly has more variety than Fireblaster, but any comparisons with Spy Hunter go no further than the similarity of the games basic theme.



Space Station

Like all the games in this package, Space Station is not entirely an original concept. Elevators, platforms and robot guards? It sounds like Impossible Mission! The task is to manoeuvre a small spaceman around a hundred rooms and corridors in this massive space station in search of Lithium Crystals, as well as a number of other items, in preparation for evacuation. Each screen has a series of platforms and lifts, and your first task is to locate a computer disk, which is crucial for your final escape. Ammunition for your gun can be replenished frequently and picking up the occasional jetpack speeds the search considerably. Each screen has an array of platforms which can be reached by moving the little guy onto elevators, or by stepping on teleport pads, which causes him to be hurled up to the next floor. Movement around the ship is impeded by the security robots which do not show any intelligence. There are many similarities with Impossible Mission, but there is one difference - Space Station isn't any good!

Summary

'Three times as much fun on your Atari ST' exclaim Prism Leisure in a tone which wouldn't wash with nine-year-old Spectrum owners, let alone mature and discerning ST users. There are few, if any, highlights in Tri-Action 1 and my main criticism is its lack of variety. I question the long-term appeal of both Warzone and Fireblaster which are both vacuous and pointless. If there is a redeeming feature, it is Space Station.

Quartet Gold - Red Rat (£19.95)

Red Rat's endeavours to produce their inimitable brand of entertainment for the Atari 800XL can now be fully appreciated by privileged ST users. The package includes four games which are entirely representative of their distinctive style and we begin this appraisal of the Rat's work with their only full-price release for the ST,



Screaming Wings

The game-screen shows an overhead view of your jet fighter flying over a vertically-scrolling terrain. 'Blast the enemy out of the sky in this mega shoot'em-up' exclaims the ecstatic scenario and that really sums up the entire game. The sky darkens with enemy planes which enter the screen from all sides and the game amounts to dodging the enemy and spraying them with gunfire. The screen scrolls relentlessly onwards and the only break from the monotony is the absorbing weaponry-enhancing features which float conveniently in your flight path. You experience the full extent of the variety in Screaming Wings within the first ten seconds of play.



The Secret of Steel!

No it isn't a B.S. shares advert, but Red Rat's attempt to bring variety to this compilation. This long-winded adventure has a multitude of characters and you can pass control to the one who is best suited to a situation, such as combat or trading. The primary characters have cameo icons and throughout the course of your quest, you can select a different character. When confronted by an evil character, the fighting screen appears and like the trading and conversation functions, you can select your actions with the icons. This is a respectable adventure with an extensive playing area and the elaborate icon system is relatively easy to use. This is certainly a unique product for Red Rat.



Pengy

'The Animation is very smooth and Pengy is very cute' exclaimed Page 6 Magazine in an in-depth review. Pengy is a terrific little arcade game which alone manages to redeem an otherwise bland compilation. Imagine a Pac Man-style screen with movable ice blocks which make up a labyrinth. You must manoeuvre Pengy around the screen moving the ice blocks around by pressing the firebutton. Of course, Pengy has his enemies, ghouls and ghosts that chase him around, but our perspicacious penguin can crush his adversaries by firing the ice blocks at them. Pengy's task in each level is to eliminate all of his enemies. Potty, pointless - but good fun.



Cosmos

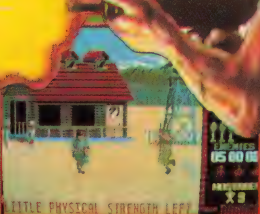
A simple and dated Galaxian clone with level after level of aliens to blast. You collect Atari symbols for extra weaponry features and fuel replenishment. The game scrolls vertically and your joystick-controlled craft can be moved anywhere on screen. What more can I say! Cosmos will keep you mildly amused for five minutes.

Summary

Red Rat's compilation is just saved from mediocrity by Pengy. Cosmos is very dated entertainment, The secret of Steel, is stuffy and rather unoriginal and Screaming Wings also fails to inspire as it lacks variety. All in all, a substandard collection of games with one saviour - a cute little penguin!

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— Six levels of thrilling coin-op action brought to life on your home micro. You'll need all the nerve and stamina you can muster to complete the mission which leads through steaming jungles and enemy strongholds. Fast and accurate shooting skills are a must if you are to liberate the prisoners and secure a safe getaway.
All the original arcade play features — magazine reloads, energy bottles, hidden supplies, rocket grenades and more... much more!

"Not only has all the action and gameplay been captured, but so has the excitement, making it one of the most satisfying and compulsive shoot-em-ups to have appeared in a long time" ACE

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Computer Hits 4 - Beau-Jolly (£29.95)

Compilation kings, Beau-Jolly, discovered the lucrative-ness of software compilations during the eight-bit boom, and now they are trying out the sixteen-bit market. 'Computer Hits' comprises two games from software giants, Activision, and two from Psygnosis.



L.C.P.

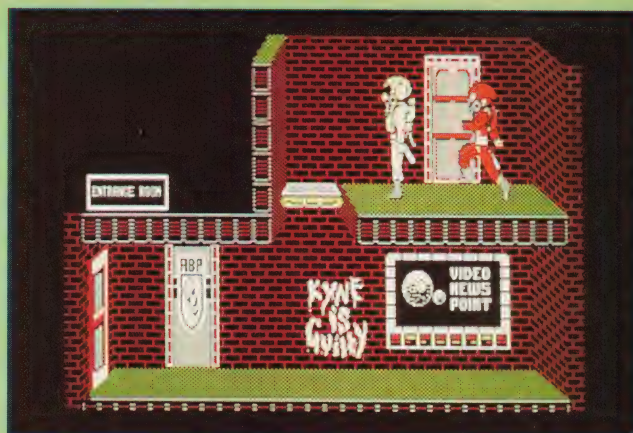
Little Computer People is a unique and intriguing concept. Imagine a little human pet of your very own living inside your computer, with no mess and no vet bills guaranteed. After naming your L.C.P. the screen shows the inside of a house, the door bell rings and 'Digby' walks into his new house and proceeds to view the residence nodding with approval. The game is played in real-time and it is your task, using various key commands, to feed him and his dog and show him love and attention. The house contains all the amenities, including a stereo, television and typewriter where the little guy can write you letters. The aim is to keep him occupied, nourished and happy. However, some callous and sadistic people like nothing better than to stave the L.C.P. and his dog, leaving him frantically knocking on the monitor screen. His facial expression changes from contentment to distress as he wastes away. L.C.P. is a hybrid game, some may say a novelty, but nobody could deny that this is a completely original and unique concept.

Hacker II

You are innocently using a commercial modem service which keeps you up to date with the latest chart positions and best selling books, when the transmission is interrupted. You have been recognized as a leading computer expert and the C.I.A. assign you a top secret mission. A Russian political strategist has formed a plan that could overthrow the U.S. government and you must hack into a Siberian military complex to discover the plan. Each screen contains a more puzzling problem and as you near the plans, your progress is impeded by ingenious security blocks. If your perception of computer entertainment is the archetypal shoot'em-up, then Hacker will be something of a revelation to you.

Bratacus

Evidently, Psygnosis were inspired by Impossible Mission with Bratacus. You control Kyne, who has been accused of a crime he did not commit and your task is to prove that he is innocent. Moving Kyne around the planet Bratacus, you must talk to other characters and make



use of opportunities and clues. Dialogue appears in speech bubbles and you must be careful what you say, as it could affect the outcome of the game. The mouse offers the best mode of control, but even this is often unresponsive and indirect. Bratacus was eagerly awaited when it was first released, but today it is decidedly dated in both presentation and content.

Deep Space

Recognized as the first space simulator with smooth-scrolling, solid graphics, Deep Space was certainly revolutionary. But has it lasted the test of time? Your mission, as usual, is to gain combat supremacy against the inevitable aliens and gain wealth through piracy and bounty hunting. The Agency pay handsomely for the destruction or capture of Vexon craft, which should easily cover the repayments on your Stryx Fighter. Again, Deep Space looks dated in comparison to more recent



space games, but the game has lost none of its appeal.

Summary

Considering Beau-Jolly's experience in software compilations, you would expect them to present a good balance of arcade entertainment, strategy, adventure and comedy, and that is exactly what they have done in this very respectable compilation. A fine mix of entertainment!

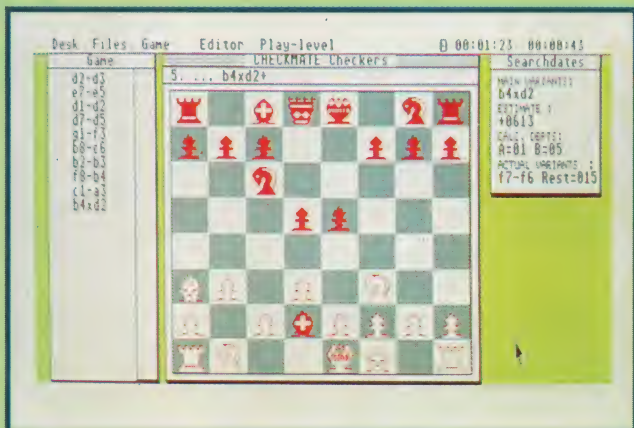
Tri-Action 2 - Prism (£19.99)

Tri-Action 2 is a much better balance of games, combining brick-busting action in a Breakout-style game called Addictaball, timeless strategy and logistics of chess in Checkmate, and car racing in Turbo ST.



Addictaball

The enduring arcade favourite, Breakout, has been imitated more times than Frank Spencer, and each game has attempted to introduce new features and variations on the brick-busting theme - Addictaball is no exception. As usual, you are supplied with a bat, and above is a solid wall of bricks which begins to advance down the screen. Using the mouse, you must manoeuvre the bat to intercept the ball which rebounds off the wall. The destruction of each brick scores points and some, which are marked by letters, contain features, such as magnetized bats, wall-eradicating lasers and extra ammunition, not to mention fast and slow-motion play. You lose a bat if the ball drops through a lower barrier which must be protected from the advancing wall. Finally, a unique feature occurs when the ball penetrates the wall and hits a hyperspace transporter which jettisons you to a higher level. Brickbusting Addictaball-style is as 'addictable' as ever. The mouse offers swift and responsive control and there are enough features to justify Addictaball's presence in the long list of Breakout clones.



Checkmate

In contrast, Robtek's Checkmate offers a basic, straightforward and easy-to-use chess program. The screen displays an overhead view of the board, with a 'game notion' display at one side, which monitors and displays the moves in the game. With the mouse, you simply move a cursor to the chess piece, click the left button, drag it to its new position and release the button to

anchor it. If you are playing against the computer, there are seven levels of difficulty to choose from which progressively allow the computer more time to make its move, from ten seconds to ten minutes. The computer is also equipped with famous opening moves which it chooses in response to your decisions. Analytical features include game replay mode and a five move mate display which enables you to review your mistakes. Checkmate is a basic but adequate chess program suitable for intermediates or experts. Checkmate is a good contrast to the other two titles in this compilation. Ideal for those who have grown tired of vacuous arcade pursuits.



Turbo ST

Just as Tri-Action 2 was shaping up as an attractive compilation, the Turbo ST disk emerged from the box. This hopeless car-racing game must rank as one of the worst games available for the ST. The droning sound effects, tiresome game-play and appalling controls, make it an effective soporific. Each race is four laps long and you play against the clock, so there are no computer-controlled cars in the race to whip up some competitive enthusiasm. The joystick controls the speed and steering, and pressing the firebutton activates the four speed transmission. It is impossible to keep the car on the track and when it does venture off the track, you are treated to a crash scene which looks like an explosion in ammunition factory. Furthermore, there are no track-side obstacles or variation in the scenery to create a feeling of speed and movement. There is a simple track design editor included, but nothing short of a free trip to the Monte Carlo Grand Prix for the disappointed purchaser could make up for this miserable game.

Summary

Even with the inclusion of car-racing turkey, Turbo ST, Tri-Action II is a fairly respectable package and certainly a much better buy than Tri-Action II! Addictaball and Checkmate together are sufficient to make this a winning combination.

Arcade Force Four - U.S. Gold (£19.99)

U.S. Gold's compilation, 'Arcade Force' is undoubtedly the star of the show. The unbeatable collection comprises arcade smash, Gauntlet, madcap humour in the official Road Runner conversion, the exciting and exhausting Metrocross and movie action in the official Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom.



Gauntlet

There was a time when arcade conversions were little more than pale reflection of the original and a big disappointment for eager arcade fans - until Gremlin Graphics set a standard with Gauntlet. From an overhead perspective, one or two players must move their mythical characters through 500 labyrinthian dungeons, avoiding the most fearsome collection of adversaries ever to grace a dungeon. The most prolific enemy are Ghosts, which swarm in the corridors and deplete your energy, while Grunts, Demons, Lobbers, Sorcerers and a charming character who is simply called Death, all make their presence known. Collecting Amulets confers on your character invisibility allowing him to move through the dungeon unmolested, while eating meat and drinking cider boosts your character's strength - poisoned morsels, however, have the opposite effect. Countless traps, hazards and other evils await you in this essential game.



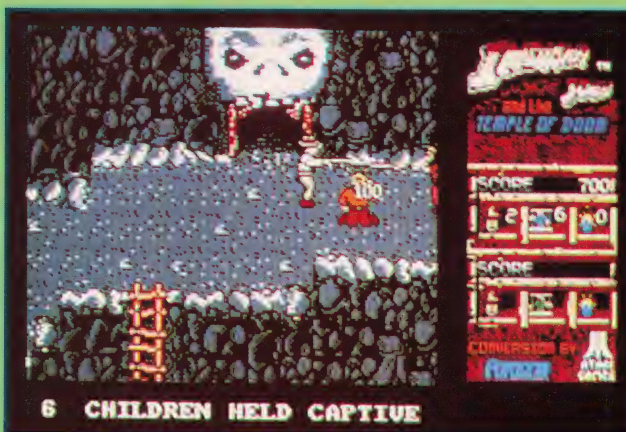
Metrocross

Get set...go! Taking control of an unlikely athlete you must manoeuvre him through the most hazardous underground station in the world. This is a race against time, but there are innumerable hazards to impede you. The action is never less than frenetic as you wrench your joystick in desperation to remove your athlete from sticky tiles designed to slow you down. Meanwhile, water

holes dampen his track suit and your enthusiasm. Each of the levels introduces new hurdles, but making use of skateboards and springboards might just take you to the finishing line. Metrocross was U.S. Gold's first arcade conversion for the ST, but it has lost none of its appeal.

Road Runner

Take Wile Coyote (Eatius Gluttinus) and Road Runner (Scrawnyus Drumstickius), place them on a winding desert road and get ready for some hectic action. Taking control of Road Runner you must evade the ravenous coyote as the chase goes from freeway to winding mountain paths. As usual, Wile's delirious brain cooks up some half-baked ideas, such as a rocket and pogo stick, and you must preserve Road Runner's life by keeping one step away from the coyote and scoffing the inevitable piles of seed and lemonade. Boulders, crevices and crazy inventions are icons in the Road Runner cartoons and they have all been used to great effect in this hilarious and challenging game.



Indiana Jones

Indiana Jones whipped his way to commercial success in the movies, in the arcades, and finally, in the home computer market. The game is loosely based on the film in which Indy must save some kidnapped children from a cavernous mine. Equipped with that trusty whip, you must manoeuvre Indy through the mine and locate the children. Snakes, martial arts experts and all manner of adversaries intend to end our hero's valiant gesture, but a press of the firebutton sends that whip cracking and the villains fleeing. This is the least successful conversion in the compilation. But if this is U.S. Gold's weakest card, then you can see that this is a compilation not to be missed.

Summary

As U.S. Gold so humbly put it: 'This is the most explosive combination of coin-op conversions ever assembled in one package.' Well, they've never been known for their modesty! However, they have received international acclaim for their excellent arcade conversions and the value for money that their products have to offer. Happily, I can report that this compilation contains both attributes. Don't miss it!

VERMINATOR

WANNA MAKE SOME DOUGH...?

Well here's your chance. As head of the Tree Council, I appoint you **HONOURARY VERMINATOR**.

Your task — rid the Royal Oak of every nasty, slimy, creepy, crawly, filthy, bug-eyed creature that's taken up residence. There's a price on the head of every one of the little blighters, so use your skill and cunning to smash 'em to smithereens and collect the bounty.

Once you've made a bob or two, visit the local hardware store and buy the latest in sophisticated equipment, specially designed to combat the meanest of meanies.

If you run a bit short, a quick visit to the bank might do the trick. You can even pop into the local casino for a flutter.

Oh, there's one other thing.

If you're really hard up for gear, you could always pay the mob a visit but remember, if you don't pay 'em back pronto, they'll send round the boys.

Verminator with over 250 colourful locations, superb sound effects and graphics. Quite simply the most fun you'll ever have in a tree.



Atari ST screen shots.



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London WC1A 1PS.

Atari ST £24.99



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The World's Greatest Epyx. (£19.99)

American software giants, Epyx, have made sport simulations their own and the World's Greatest Epyx contains a representative sample of their efforts to bring sporting competition to the reluctant armchair athlete.

After the success of Summer Games in 1985, Winter Games was a natural progression. The competition begins with the Free-style event or 'Hotdogging' as it is known by the skiing fraternity. Your skier stands above a slope and, once airborne, manipulating the joystick makes him somersault.

Biathlon is performed against the clock and the skis must move smoothly and rhythmically by means of left and right joystick movement. On reaching the targets, the gunsight jolts around as you struggle to aim with the joystick.

Next, Bobsledding sends you rattling around the icy walls of the suicidal Cresta Run, and even if you cannot feel the bumps and jolts, the breathtaking speed is simulated effectively. Every curve and bump must be anticipated as the sled hurtles around the walls. Apply the brakes and you'll lose valuable time - go too fast and you'll finish the run on your ass!

If the only way to get on the Johnny Carson show is to throw yourself off a ski-jump then you can forget it! As the skier nears the end of the slope, pulling back on the joystick gives him height. The skis must be aligned and pushing forward causes the skier to 'kiss the skis'. Then pulling back on the joystick prepares him for touchdown and...crash! 'The Eagle Has Landed!' Winter Olympics is classic Epyx!



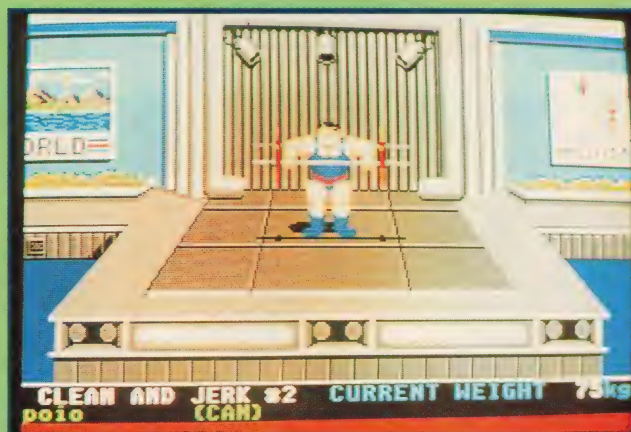
Championship Wrestling

It's camp, it's crazy, it's over the top; and with characters like Purple Hayes mincing around the ring, you can imagine that this is more comedy than realistic simulation. Eight larger-than-life characters contest for the championship and each one has his own individual move, throw or hold. There are numerous combinations which are achieved with various joystick movements, but in the heat of the action it is a bit hit and miss. The characterizations are amusing and colourful, although the movements are jerky and the joystick controls are indistinct. Plenty of laughs here, but limited appeal in the longterm.

World Games

International sports are simulated here, from Log rolling in Canada to Sumo wrestling in Japan. The first event is weightlifting in Russia and after selecting the weight, you must wrench the joystick to effect the clean and jerk.

Next, if it's cliff diving then it must be Acapulco! The water level rises and falls above the rocks and timing the dive is a matter of life or death. During the dive, the joystick controls the diver and you can somersault or swan dive. For maximum points, the diver must complete the



dive perpendicular to the water, as he completes the dive.

The globe-trotting continues to Canada, where you must outwit a sturdy lumberjack in the Log Rolling. Then it's back to Europe for some Slalom Skiing, Barrel Jumping in beer swilling Bulgaria and Tossing the Cabor in Bonnie Scotland. The final event is joystick-grappling in Japan which simulates the dainty art of Sumo. Now there's variety for you! World Games is great fun, but due to the hybrid sports in question, I don't think it should be taken too seriously.

Super Cycle

Although outdated by Super Hangon, Super Cycle is still worth a few circuits. There is a selection of tracks to



choose from and the joystick controls the bike as you hurtle into corners at full tilt and hug the bends rather unrealistically. Points are awarded for quick lap times as well as your final position in the race, and if you can stand the droning sound effects, Super Cycle rivals even the most recent bike-racing games.

Summary

All this in one package? Unbelievable! Multiple participation often brings the best out of home computer entertainment and Epyx presents some of the finest competitive games available. Although sport is the main theme, each of the games is different, which makes this an unbeatable package.

Leaderboard Birdie - U.S. Gold (£19.99)

Finally, we end this compilation megatest with the finest sports simulation available for the ST, Leaderboard and the Leaderboard Birdie Tournament disk, which introduces four new courses. Up to four players can participate in the tournament on four skill levels from Novice to Professional, and you can select to play 18, 36, 54 or 72 holes. As the course materializes, your golfer is ready to tee-off and you can see the trees, bunkers, and water hazards down the fairway. You have a full complement of woods and irons which can be viewed and selected by moving the mouse up and down and from side to side.

A course and status display at the right of the screen informs you of your par, your position in the tournament, the length of the course in yards, and a Power and Snap sliding gauge. With the mouse, you line up the cross-hair sights in the direction of the green, check the length of the driving range and select a suitable wood or iron. Then

pressing and releasing the right-hand mouse button sets the snap and power of the shot and the golfer swings and hits the ball. Immediately, the course changes to show your new position on the fairway and you must select a different club for the next shot.

With the ball on the green, a putter is automatically chosen, the flag is removed from the hole and a different power indicator allows you to judge the shot. Additionally, a gauge indicates any undulation on the green which enables you to compensate for any slopes or dips. Finally, the scores are accumulated on the leaderboard.

Leaderboard has everything that you could want from a computer game: It is constructive, requires skill and thought

and is acutely competitive. The simulation is incredibly accurate and the general presentation of the game is slick and professional. This is what we want!



To sum up...

Five Star £24.95

Enduro Racer	60%
Rampage	44%
Barbarian	73%
Crazy Cars	32%
Wizball	67%
Overall	55%

Tri Action 1 £19.99

Fireblaster	37%
Warzone	37%
Space Station	49%
Overall	41%

Leaderboard Birdie £19.99

Leaderboard	61%
Tournament	61%
Overall	61%

Quartet Gold £19.95

The Secret of Steel	40%
Cosmos	25%
Pengy	57%
Screaming Wings	49%
Overall	43%

Epyx Epics £19.99

Winter Games	64%
World Games	57%
Champ Wrestling	54%
Overall	59%

Tri Action 2 £19.99

Checkmate	58%
Turbo ST	25%
Addictaball	56%
Overall	46%

Computer Hits 4 £29.95

LCP	49%
Hacker II	39%
Bratacus	46%
Deep Space	57%
Overall	48%

Arcade Force Four £19.99

Indiana Jones	51%
Road Runner	75%
Metrocross	68%
Gauntlet	76%
Overall	68%

All Percentages given are overall scores based solely on the opinion of the author of this megatest and may therefore differ from scores given when the individual games were originally reviewed.

• MISC FACTS • 8 COMPILATION PACKS • 28 INDIVIDUAL GAMES
• A TOTAL SAVING OF £354 • 1467 ST ACTION % POINTS

The adrenalin is pumping as you move Delta, Echo and Mike along the perimeter of the building using the shadows of doorways as cover.

STAI



We may have mastered pretty graphics and sound, here in Britain, but the majority of home-made software is completely devoid of originality and ingenuity. You want originality? Hostages has it! You want realism? Hostages is the most involving and brutally realistic games I have ever played. From the street-level assault to the incredible embassy shoot-out, this game will keep you on the edge of your seat. The complete presentation is superb, the controls are accurate and responsive and the sound effects realistic. Infogrames have taken a seemingly impossible theme and have created a veritable masterpiece. 'Vive la France!' And as for British software? It is getting as boring and stodgy as our national food!

JS

1900 hours, 12.08.88. ITN report - central London.
"Information is patchy, but it is estimated that nine terrorists have entered the Miracian embassy. Until now there has been no communication and so their identity is unknown, but in the wake of the assassination of President Mharouch, police suspect an extreme faction of the Schoulac militia!"

HOSTAGES

--- INFORGRAMES (£19.95) ---

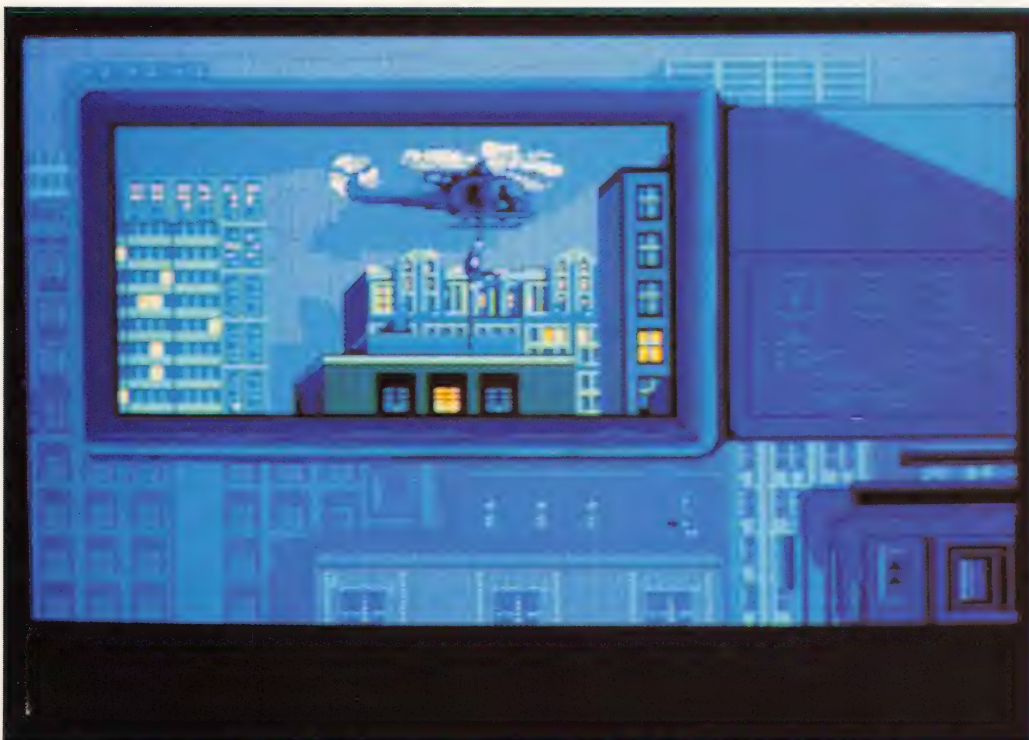
2100 hours, 17.08.88. ITN report. "It has been confirmed that the extremist Schoulac militia have perpetrated the siege... an hour ago, two hostages were tortured, shot dead and thrown from the third-floor window... commu-

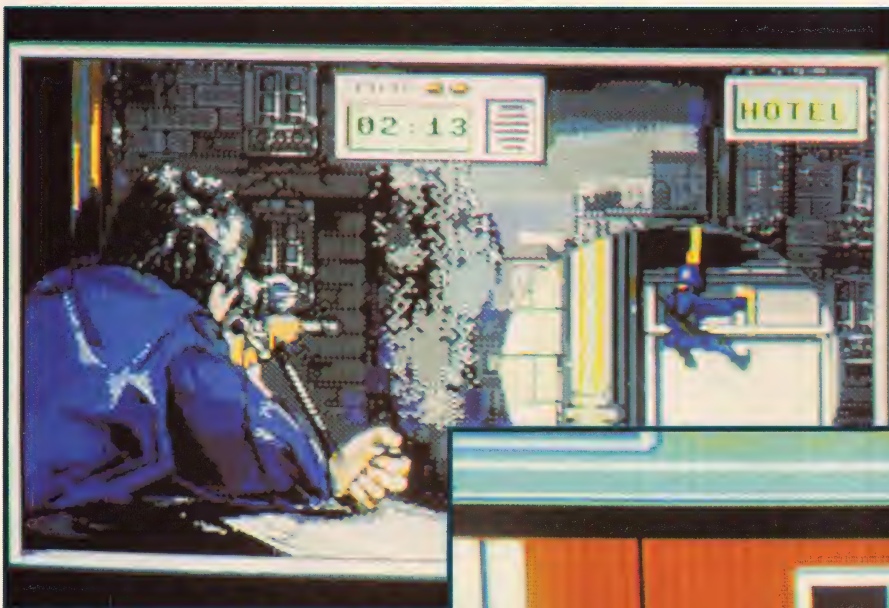
nication between police and the terrorists has broken down... a police spokesman has described the terrorists' demands as unacceptable... unconfirmed reports say that the SAS has been briefed on the siege!"

2330 hours, 17.08.88. SAS headquarters, Major Freeman: "There are eleven of them - professionals! They've spread the hostages all over the embassy which makes things difficult. Here's a blue-print of the build-

ing. There are three floors which are connected by stairs and I guess that the hostages are in these rooms. Gentlemen, are you ready for Operation Ultimatum?"

No amount of training or briefing can prepare you for a siege situation! The embassy grounds have been cordoned off and, from street level, the only access to the building is along the rear perimeter. Delta, Echo and Mike must be manoeuvred along the street and into the embassy. Delta waits in a dark doorway and a quick wrench of the joystick to the right sends him trotting along the perimeter wall. Down! Hell! The terrorists are using the search lights which were a





Smash! A size ten army boot removes the window, and the first commando has entered the Embassy. Silently, Tango's task is to eliminate all terrorists and preserve the life of innocent hostages. A volley of fire thuds into the chest of a crazed terrorist.



part of the new security system at the embassy - terrific! A second light picks him up and for a split second, Delta is bathed in a pool of blinding light - a volley of high-velocity bullets ricochets off the masonry just inches above his head! Quick, into the next doorway, adrenaline pumping like high-performance fuel - there's no cover for twenty yards, but a small window affords momentary salvation... thirty more yards and into the perimeter building. Joystick Control moves to Echo and then Mike, who must reach further destination around the perimeter. Pressing the spacebar throughout the street-level assault reveals a map which shows your position.

The terrorists have carried out their ultimatum and another hostage was slaughtered and thrown out of the door. T.V. cameras follow a helicopter as it hovers above the embassy building and six more SAS troops abseil onto the rooftop. Control moves to the back-up force who must abseil from the roof to the third floor. From the view-point of a police marksman



I can find absolutely nothing to fault in Hostages - it really is state-of-the-art software: it has excellent graphics and atmospheric sound, and the game itself is totally engrossing. Of all the sections, the one when you actually enter the embassy has got to be my favourite; there is genuine tension as you meet an armed terrorist face to face. No corners have been cut anywhere, and each of the sections could quite easily be sold as a game in its own right. With its many difficulty levels and situations, Hostages will keep you stalking, shooting and rolling throughout the next few weeks to come. Mind you, if I do have to have a moan: did Infogrames really have to show that the hostages were that frightened?

SM

detector fails to pick up any movement. Your position is indicated by a red directional arrow so that you can see in which direction you are going.

As expected, a terrorist is guarding the stairs. Without hesitation, you press the firebutton and six bullets thud into his chest. A quick glance at the body-heat detector shows signs of life in a room at the end of the corridor. In the first room, a battered hostage is sitting on the floor; in the next room, you surprise two startled terrorists and another six bullets rattle out of your magazine. Moving towards the hostage you urge him to follow you, but your newly-acquired protege is in a bad state and so your progress will be slower. You glance in the adjacent room to see a terrorist

STA
Rating
82%

GRAPHICS: 85%
SOUND: 75%

LASTING APPEAL: 79%
ADDICTIVENESS: 82%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

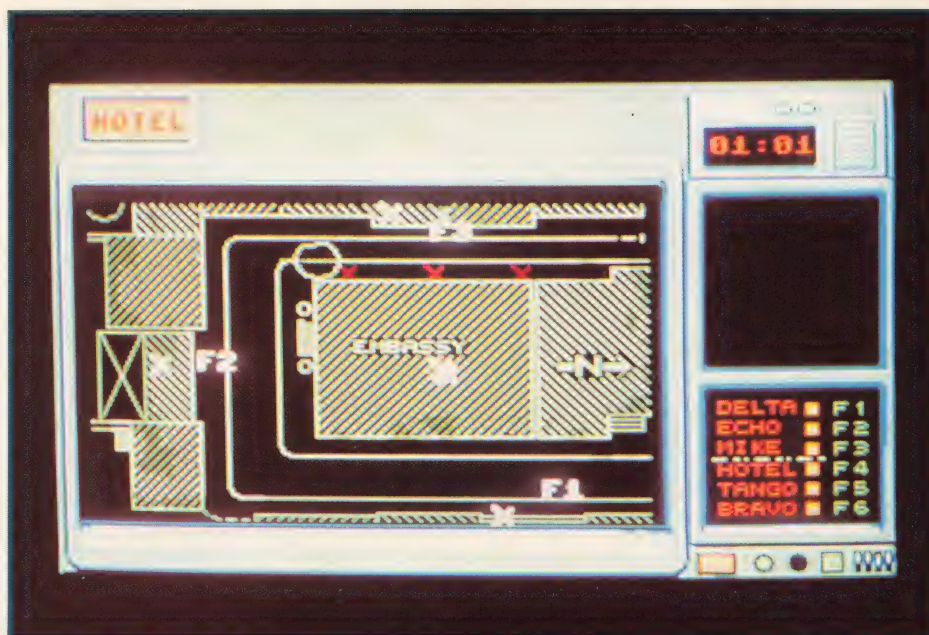
who is positioned in a building opposite the embassy, wrenching the joystick to the right lets the rope slip through the carabina and jolting it upwards halts the descent. Pressing the firebutton makes him swing away from the building whilst simultaneously pushing left makes him kick out the window. Immediately, the screen changes to show the commando crashing through the window inside the embassy. A status display shows a map of the building and a body-heat



holding one hostage by the window. Giving the position and floor, you can switch to the police marksman in the opposite building. The joystick moves the sight down the building to the window. Two silhouettes are highlighted, and relying on the information you have been given, you aim and fire.

Time is running out! Back inside the embassy, the terrorists are scared, running around and firing wildly - a wayward bullet catches the commando in the chest... the lights go out. Back on the rooftop more back-up is required Delta abseils down to the second floor, smashes through the window and scans the area. The dead commando shall remain nameless - he was simply killed doing his duty. Two terrorists are holding the remaining hostages. Delta heads for the third floor....

0800 hours, 18.08.88. TV-AM - Anne Diamond: "Once again the SAS triumph! It makes you feel proud to be British, doesn't it, Mike?" "Certainly does Anne! After the break we'll be joined on the sofa by literary genius, Jeffrey Archer, and there will be a report on how to breed chipmunks. **STA**



With the men in position, you must direct the assault from the top of the building.

Without doubt, Hostages possesses the high standard of graphics and sound we have come to expect. Infogrames have, however, also managed to include those precious qualities, playability and atmosphere. The game's subject matter may be somewhat questionable, but then so is the act of holding people against their will at gun-point. The French programmers have dealt with the subject of terrorism in a way that certainly does not glamorize it, and I hope Hostages receives the attention it so readily deserves.

NC

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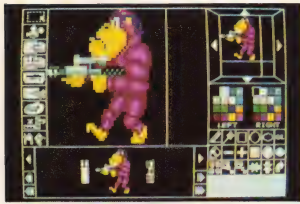
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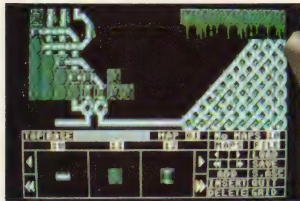
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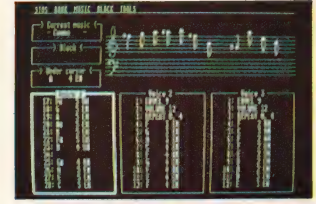
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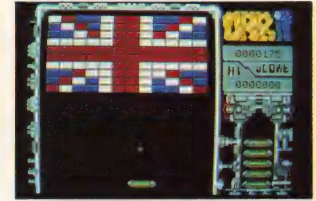
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STA
Rating

76%

GRAPHICS: 75%
SOUND: 85%

LASTING APPEAL: 76%
ADDICTIVENESS: 75%

DIFFICULTY: HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 4010

Elemental: 'Existing as an uncombined chemical element' or 'resembling a great force of nature'. Two different definitions which are not at all relevant to the contents of this hybrid game. Erick Dupuit and Jean-Luc Langlois, collectively known as Lankhor, have combined a melange of elements to create this unusual pursuit. The game is as difficult to explain as it is to understand and the absence of comprehensive instructions is an unforgivable oversight. The screen shows a bird's-eye view of the first of thirty-two stages in this game and each section is introduced by an original and catchy piece of digitized music, penned by Monsieur Langlois himself.

No description, however comprehensive and straightforward could adequately explain this game! Using the joystick you must manoeuvre a green and brown ball through each stage, avoiding a variform collection of adversaries. The most prolific of these are yellow spheres which pursue your protege with disturbing intelligence. What little information about the game is given suggests that you avoid anything that moves, and that is pretty sound advice! In addition to the yellow spheres, whirlwinds follow and wait for you to make a wrong move. Meanwhile, red

'Vive la difference!' Some of the most original software has been exported from belle France, they are breathing 'A Breath of French Air' into a stale market.'

ELEMENTAL

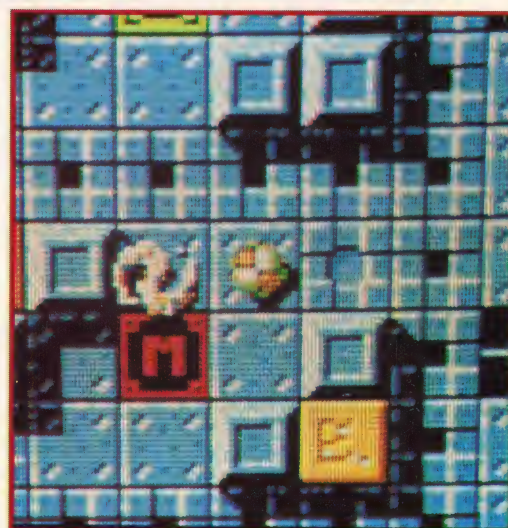
— LANKHOR (£19.95) —

How can I describe Elemental? To say it is a Pacman-type game would certainly be unfair. Elemental is one of those rare games that falls into an indescribable category. Whilst being eminently playable, Elemental also manages to be fiendishly frustrating and equally compelling. The good use of colour and the outlandish sound effects all help to give this unexpected game added sparkle. How refreshing, it is, too, to see such an original game of such high quality. Thank you Lankhor, I raise my hat to you!

NC

lights appear like cat's eyes along the paths and must be avoided at all costs. Your spherical charge has an inadequate six lives which are wasted on the slightest contact with any enemy, and this demise is indicated by a sound effect which resounds like the whacking of a plate-glass window with a twenty-four-pound sledgehammer.

Outnumbered ten to one, the aim is indeed 'to everything that moves', and by using the following unique method, eliminate your adversaries one by one. First you must negotiate a safe path to a square marked by the letter 'M', which produces a small cube. The next stage of the strategy is to lure an adversary over the cube, which transforms the would-be assassin into a harmless red and white capsule. The capsule can then be safely collected and transported to a square marked by a letter 'V' which changes the colour of the capsule to green and white. To complete the final stage of the strategy, the green and white capsule must be picked up, transported to and installed in a capsule-shaped indentation. Only then is the original enemy rendered inactive and harmless and you must turn your attention to converting the remainder of the oppos-

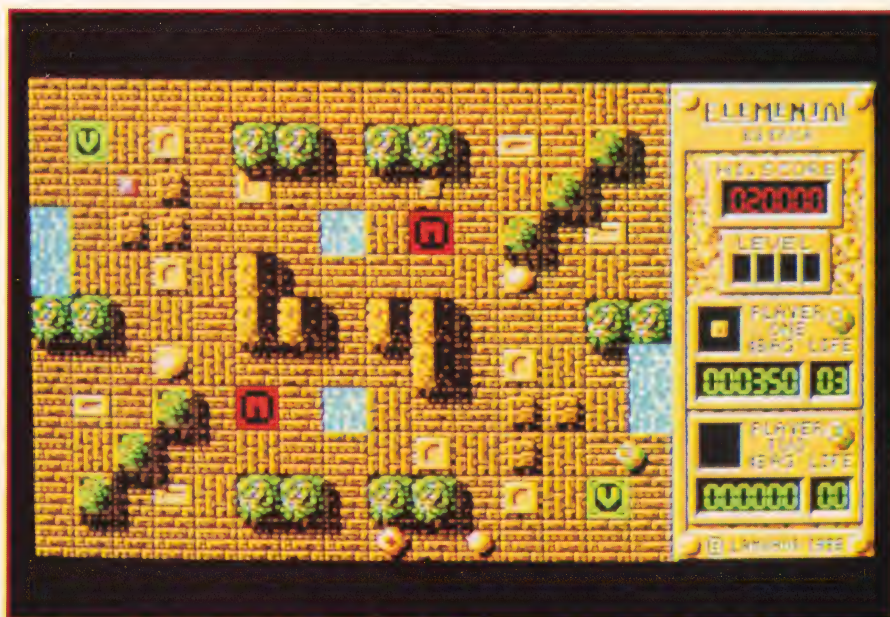


ing faction into capsules. This lengthy elimination process can be accelerated by luring the spherical adversaries into round indentations. Finally, successfully completing this operation yields small yellow squares, which when collected enable you to advance to the next level.

STA

If there was a prize for originality and ingenuity in software, Lankhor would be prime candidates for the award. Due to the regularity with which of the dozen or so themes are regurgitated, the market is becoming tired, stale and predictable. Therefore, on the rare occasion that an original and innovative game like Elemental is released, the creators deserve an industry-sized slap on the back. We have been conditioned to apply a certain criteria when we evaluate computer games, and Elemental's individuality may effect its sales. Sadly, this would discourage companies like Lankhor from experimenting and we would continue to be brainwashed into accepting the same old dross.

JS



From dangerous adversary to harmless capsule, the process of disabling your enemy is ingenious.

Lombard



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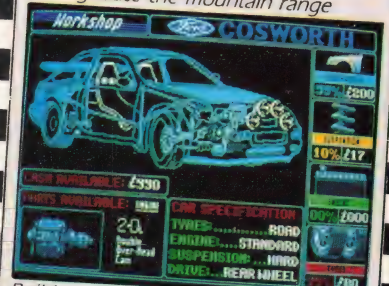
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The screen is split into three sections: the main playing area; a radar screen, showing where and when to anticipate the alien's arrival; and a bar showing your remaining life-force. The main playing area takes up three-quarters of the whole screen, and is depicted using some of the best multi-layer, parallax scrolling I have ever seen. The installations are scattered, at regular intervals, on the surface of the planet, and care must be taken not to shoot any of these. The aliens materialise almost as soon as you have started the game, and off you go, letting them have it with your front-mounted laser and your three smart bombs - oops, sorry! Vaporisers. The aliens come in three forms: the very common, and very easy to shoot, Landers; Krellian mother ships, which divide into seven tiny spore-like craft when shot; and vicious, blue Hunters, which only appear if you've been hanging around on a stage for too long. Occasionally, on shooting a Lander, it will

Yet more alien hoards byte the dust against still more oh so carefully drawn scrolling backdrops.



STARRAY

LOGOTRON (£19.95)

Steve Bak and I have at least one thing in common - we both like our games fast, full of blast and most importantly, we both strongly believe that games are for relaxation and should not cause the player any excessive mental strain. Starray fits all these requirements. It is basically a much updated and enhanced version of the blast'em-up classic, Defender, but with many subtle gameplay changes that make it far more playable than the original. Needless to say the graphics and sound are of the highest quality. Overall, not quite as good as Return to Genesis but still definitely a must for any keen blast'em-up fans.

HG

There is only one problem with an unashamed shoot'em-up like Star Ray, and that's its ability to provide lasting appeal. Once you have put your eyes back in their sockets after admiring the excellent parallax scrolling, and swooned at the amazing sampled music, you realise it is simply a jazzed-up Defender. Mind you, I'm not knocking it for that - Defender was, and still is, one of the best shoot'em-ups ever released. It's just that, in this day and age, we expect something with a bit more depth.

Still, if you yearn for the 'good old days', when computer games were simple, mindless, yet playable, I recommend you try this out. But be warned, it may rid you of those rose-coloured spectacles.

SM

ble. If, during play, you collide with anything, your life-force bar will be substantially reduced. If it reaches zero, your ship will explode, and you will die.

The game has several other stages, but the graphics are the only things which change - the backdrops changing to ice-floes, pipe systems and forests, and the emplacements changing likewise.

STA



relinquish a bonus ball. When caught, one of these lettered balls will enhance your ship's acceleration, its weaponry, or will make you temporarily invulnerable. Should an alien slip through your defences, it will head straight for an installation and, as it says in the instructions, pervert it (make of that what you will). This changes it into an enemy gun turret which will start firing at you. If this happens, the mutated emplacement must be destroyed as soon as possi-

STA Rating
75%

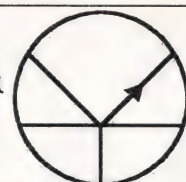
GRAPHICS: 81%
SOUND: 85%

LASTING APPEAL: 64%
ADDICTIVENESS: 77%

DIFFICULTY: EASY
1ST DAY SCORE: 42455



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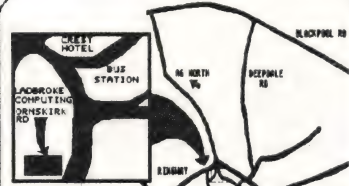
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Mafdet and the Book of the Dead, we are told, is a graphical adventure set in ancient Egypt. Mafdet is the Cat Goddess of Revenge, and on this occasion her feline fury is directed towards old Seth, an evil god who has stolen the Book of the Dead and hidden it deep in the underworld. Without this book, no Egyptian can enter the afterlife when they die. The scenario almost has an Homeric plausibility about it - it's a pity the game hasn't! Commissioned by Isis the Earth goddess, you and Maf must retrieve the book and return it to the Egyptian peo-

MAFDET

SOFTWARE HORIZONS (£14.95)

ple, who are just dying to get to the afterlife.

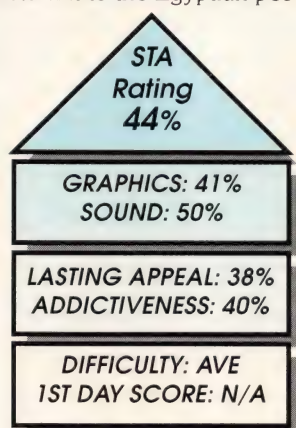
A rather podgy Mafdet stands on the shores of the Nile, with a Sphinx in the background, emphasizing that this is indeed Egypt. Wrenching the joystick to the left makes our plump pussycat walk reluctantly through a shanty town and into a confrontation with her first adversary, a bee. The bee buzzes about a bit and seems to accelerate the expenditure of her energy, but it is only a minor irritation. Then the first of Seth's guards does a sort of Sand Dance on screen and, with the firebutton pressed, manipulating the joystick wields Mafdet's sword to very little effect. You can parry and thrust with the guard or simply push the joystick to the left whilst continuously pressing the firebutton which forces the guard to do a reverse sand dance back to where he came from. Collecting

Amulets replenishes Mafdet's life force as she enters the underworld. Predictably, as Mafdet moves closer to the book, guards, fire-breathing dragons, sword-wielding skeletons and the occasional bee all contribute to the depletion of her statutory nine cat lives. There are a number of obstacles that our Mafdet cannot traverse and so pressing the spacebar activates a radical metamor-

phosis from podgy goddess to cat.

The game winds its weary way through labyrinths and dungeons towards its conclusion. There is the occasional puzzle to solve, but before you even reach these, the unresponsive joystick controls and the general naughtiness of the game will leave you feeling apathetic, spiritless and longing to join the dying Egyptians in the afterlife.

STA



With the exception of Frost Byte, all of the titles released on the Micro Value label have been decidedly under-average, consisting of tired gameplay, weak graphics and sound, and very little lasting appeal. Sadly, Elf continues this trend.

Having been thrown out of the King's castle for being a naughty boy, our intrepid Elf must redeem himself by travelling across the Kingdom in search of the two halves of the Golden Pumpkin. He has only 24 hours to complete his job, and as the kingdom is 250 platform-filled screens large and is inhabited

ELF

MICROVALUE (£14.95)

by hordes of monsters, his task is not an easy one.

Your Elf begins his quest unarmed and rapidly getting hungrier. These problems can both be remedied by collecting the arrows and food that are littered randomly around the screens. Once you have an arrow, pressing fire will release it, causing the nasty on the receiving end to vaporise in an explosion of blue bubbles.

Although he was banished weaponless, Elf was granted limited magical powers which, amongst other things, allow our hero to teleport to a dice sub-game. These dice have been scattered around the kingdom, and pressing 'G' allows you to enter this 'Snakes and Ladders' variant. This rather pointless escapade sees our hero attempting to ascend to

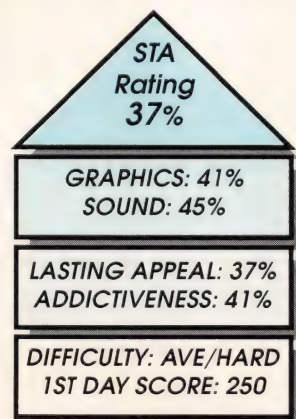
the top of the screen, piercing all who get in his way, in the search for bonus points.

I can find very little to recommend about Elf: the graphics and sound are barely adequate; the scrolling can't keep Elf central, leading me on many occasions to walk straight into a monster and,

worst of all, Elf's control system is appalling. For no apparent reason, the programmers have incorporated a method in which the Elf will continue in one direction until told otherwise. This means the character is very unresponsive, and the pixel-perfect positioning the game requires is totally out of the question.

A mundane game with nothing to redeem it. In fact I would say that this game is definitely bad for your Elf!

STA



GIVING THE GAME AWAY

The response to my plea for more tips this month has been phenomenal. Well done! I particularly like the in-depth guides you send in, like this month's Starglider II solution. Right, I'll shut up now, so you can go and read this month's porky, and bulging-at-the-seams tips section. Well, what are you waiting for? Off you go...



Nebulus - Hewson

This game is like a fine wine - it gets better with age. Anyway, I was on the phone to its programmer, John Philips, the other day and he mentioned an in-built cheat mode. You want it? OK. Whilst on the title page type: "HellolamJMP" (n.b. no spaces), now enter the game, and if a tower is proving too hard, press one of the 'F' keys to teleport you to the one you want to attempt.

Sorcery+ - Virgin

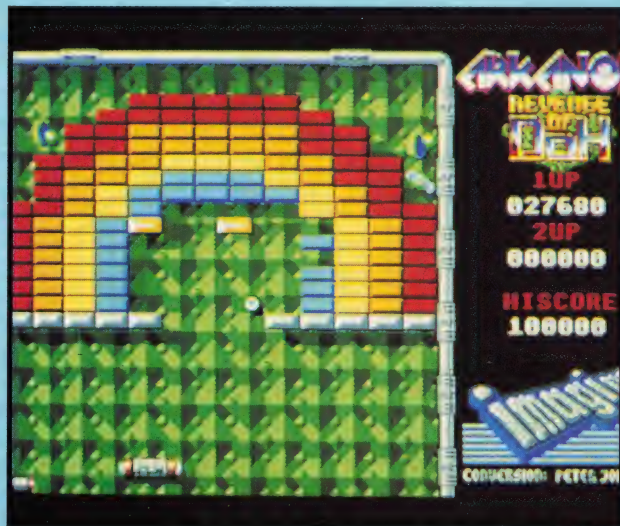
Crikey O'Reilly and bless my little woolly socks! No sooner is a game released than someone finds a cheat mode right away! At any stage in the game, type GAS MASK WHEELER WANTS CHEAT (with spaces) and you will be totally invulnerable, all the doors open, the timer stops AND it gives you access to the 'plus' part of the game. Ta very much to Roy Alexander from Poole, for sending that in.

Spy V Spy - Databyte

Shay Rapaport and, this time, his friend, Noam Bekovitz, also sent in this item for this extremely under-rated 8 to 16-bit transition. If you hang around near the exit to the airport until the other spy has collected all of the objects, you can beat him up and, when he dies, steal the goodies and make good your escape.

Revenge of Doh - Imagine

As well as the cheat printed last month, 'Doh' has another one. In the same fashion as last months, press 'Caps Lock' when the Imagine logo appears, but this time type: "Daley88". Now, when the game has loaded, you can continue on the level in which you died.



Super Hang-On - Electric Dreams

Complete most of a stage or finish it, so that you can enter your name at position one of the high-score table (one of four). Instead of entering your name, input (with the joystick or mouse) 207L, a line of dots will appear now, instead of the aforementioned. Now, wait until the



next screen appears, and then press CTRL, ALT, Z and T, in that order, and wait for the next screen to appear. Let go of the T and this will activate the cheat mode. What this does is give you the option of changing the centrifugal force. Change it to zero and you will be able to just hold down the nitro and zoom along. Of course, if it gets too easy, change the force to something higher. Thanks for that go to the Software Studios mob.

Puffy's SAGA



Screenshot on ST



Screenshot on ST



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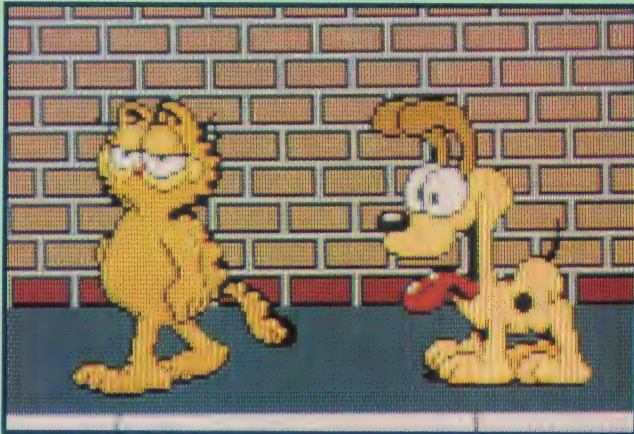


Garfield - The Edge

Graeme Dolderson from Sheffield, has sent in the complete solution to this barely average arcade/adventure.

First of all, take the lamp from the bedroom. Find and eat the aniseed, before Odie does, as it is important that he is carrying nothing at this stage. Now go to the garden shed and fall through the hole in the floor, and when you land keep going right. Now go down, and down again, then go right to find the sickeningly cute Nermal. Give the cuddly creep a good kick, and repeat until he drops the mouse. Now wait until Odie picks up the mouse, and make your way back to the park. Now drop the lamp and take the mouse from Odie. Go to the health shop and drop the mouse, and pick up the spinach

'donut' (yeurk!). Mosey on down to the pizza party and then go left to the big rat. Drop the 'donut' and boot the chest when it runs away. Take the key from the chest, and go up and back to the park. Drop the key near the bench and return to your garden. Take the bucket or spade and go to the hardware shop. Use whatever object you collected, and take the dollar that appears. Go back to the health shop and use the newly-acquired dollar, you will receive some bird seed. Go back to the bench, drop the seed and take the key. When the bird comes along, hitch a ride to the pound. Now just follow the doors until you find Arlene.



Starglider II - Rainbird

This game can be rather perplexing to begin with, but Grant Smith from Edmonton in the smoke, has sent in a complete solution. First a guide to various points in the game:

The Enemy:

Space Pirates - Not really worth bothering with, but if you do, collect what they drop with your tractor beam. They normally carry Castrobars and mineral rock.

The Egrons - If you are playing to complete the game, try not to engage in combat, as they can really drain your energy.

Guide to weapons:

- Bouncing Bombs - Found in Castron service depots. Use on Projector bases only.
- Fire and flee missiles - Found in Millway service depots, best used on Walkers, Stompers etc.
- Projected Time Warp Cuboids - Given to you by Professor Taymar. Much more powerful than gas plasma lasers, but they do tend to gobble up your energy.
- Neutron Bomb - Use on the space station only.

To complete the game, you have to build a neutron bomb. And to do so you have to collect the following 'ingredients' (it may help to use the 'Painting with Rolf' option to familiarise yourself with the objects):

- Cask of Vistan Wine: Obtain a bouncing ball from Vista, and trade it at one of Castron's service depots.
- Cluster of Nodules (oo-er!): Found on surface of Dante.
- Egron mini-rocket: Surfaces of Aldos and Q-Beta.
- Case of nuclear fuel: Aldos surface.
- Asteroid: Cruise in space anywhere between Apogee

and Millway, with your stardrive off.

- Flat diamond: To get this, first capture an Egron mechanical whale, by, once again, cruising near Millway with your stardrive off. Then take it to the Questa service depot and trade it in.

- Lump of mineral rock: Q-Beta's surface.

- Crate of castrobars: Go to Enos and pick up a petrified tree from its surface. Now trade it at one of Castron's service depots.

- Professor Halsen Taymar: This guy is needed to provide the finishing touches to the bomb. When you have collected most or all of the bomb's parts, go to Broadway. The professor will be speeding along in a hijacked Emma 2 somewhere between tunnel entrances. Catch up with him and pull him aboard with your tractor beam. The professor obviously has a sweet tooth, so make sure you have got a crate of Castrobars. He will now install a Projected Time Warp Cuboid Launcher (a what?). Now return to the Apogee service depot.

When you reach the depot, you will find the neutron bomb waiting for you. Take it, leave Apogee and head for Q-Beta. However, if all of the seven projectors on Millway's moons are complete, drop in on one of them and blow it up with a bouncing bomb. Now proceed to the Q-Beta's false moon. And as you approach, turn off your stardrive. You will now see the space station surrounded by Egron mini-sentinels. Take a couple out with your F+F missiles. Now move towards the space station, and when you are directly over it, drop the bomb. You've done it!

Finally, a joke I made up: What does Jez San have for breakfast?

Answer: Egron toast! (geddit?) (Yes Steve, any more like that and you'll get it! Ed.)

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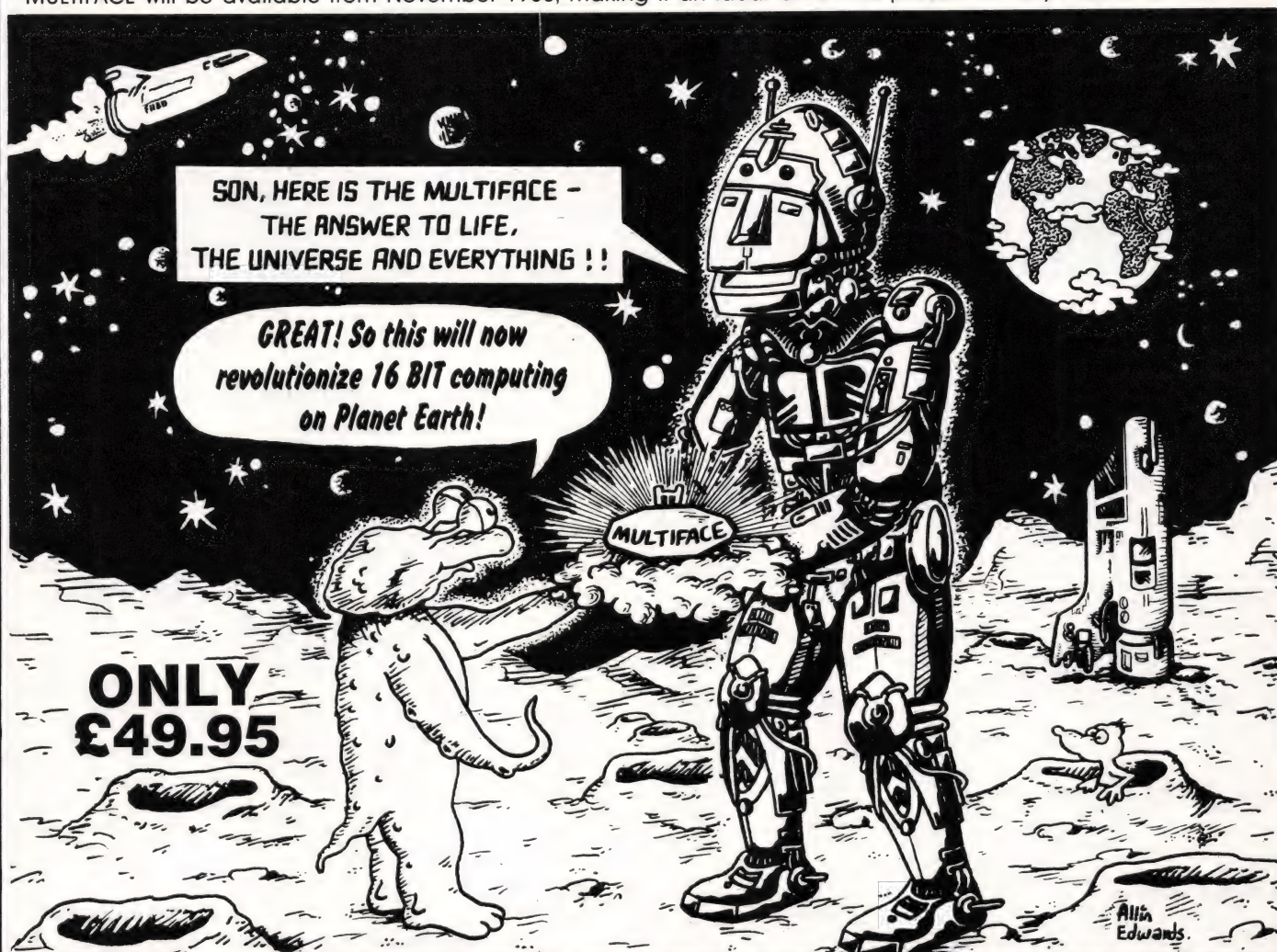
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Where Time Stood Still - Ocean

Although this was only reviewed this month, it hasn't stopped the programmers from giving me some tasty tips:

If fatso Clive gets stuck in the bridge, pull him out with the rope.

If you are having trouble getting past the clutching hand, don't forget to take Gloria's bag. If you give it to some natives, they will give you some meat (bootifull!). Drop that in front of the hand and it will take that instead of one of your party.

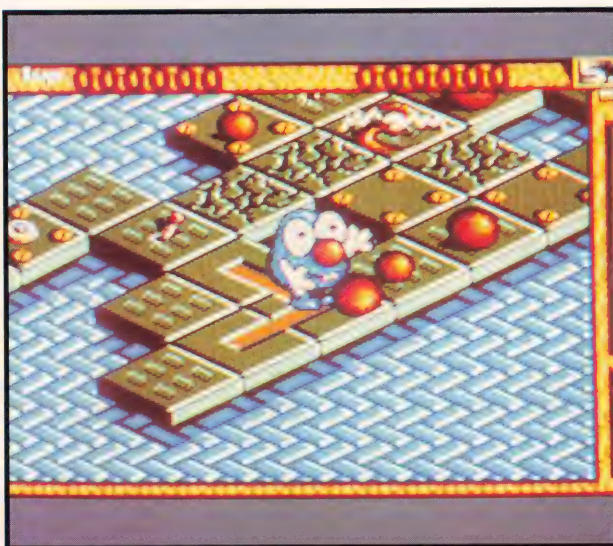
Use the river to get past the cannibal village.

They also recommend that you always use sound effects. And they mentioned something about some dynamite to the west of the first village, but wouldn't tell me what to do with it. I might be able to wrangle it out of them by next month, but if you know, drop me a line to tell me.

Bombuzal - Imageworks

Some of this game's levels are so ingenious it's unbelievable! So, if you are having a spot of bother, here are some of the codes for later levels:

RATT, ROSS, LISA, GOLD, DAVE, OPAL, TREE.

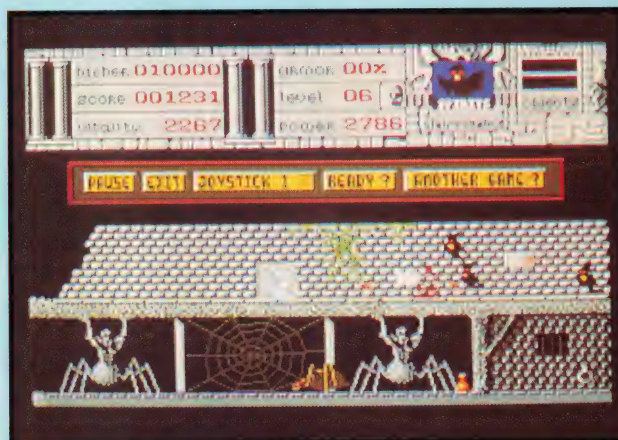


Street Fighter - Capcom/ Go!

I was really disappointed by this appalling conversion, especially since the preview screen shots looked so good. Still, Shakeel Ahmed, from Rochdale has sent in this useful buggette. If you are finding it hard to beat a competitor (and God knows why, since they are all a push-over), type STREET CHEAT on the title screen and press the 'Help' key, you will now be transported to the next level. Ta very much to USG's Danielle for that one, too.

Warlock's Quest - ERE International

Normally when you begin this obscure arcade/adventure, you begin with 3500 health points. But, if you were to press F1 when the game asks you if you are ready, you will start with 5000. Not a lot, I know, but every little helps. Thanks go to Shay Rapaport from Israel for that useful tit-bit.



Ikari Warriors - Elite (again!)

This cheat is only useful for those of you who own Domark's 'Star Wars' as well. Start the game, and crash into the first pillbox you come across. Quickly press F1 to quit. Remove the Ikari disk and slam in the 'Star Wars' one instead. Restart and, once again, crash into the pillbox. Press F1 again, and on restarting, there will be no water, ground, pillboxes; in fact nothing but soldiers and the occasional tank. Now the game is much, much easier to complete. Thanks very much to Scott Warren and John Pearce from Ipswich for that.

Well, did you enjoy it? I thought it was one of the best yet, what a lorra, lorra cheats you sent in. Still, don't rest on your laurels - keep 'em rolling in. Prize winners this month are Grant Smith for his excellent Starglider II solution and Graeme Dolderson for his Garfield one. Right, I'm off. I'll see you next month. 'Bye.

Steve.

STA

UNIVERSAL CHEAT ROUTINE FOR ATARI ST BASIC

```
10 REM ATARI BASIC CONTROL ROUTINE
20 OPTION BASE 1: DIM A%(256):CHEAT=VARPTR(A%(1))
30 DEF SEG=0:REM DELETE IF USING NEW BASIC
40 X=CHEAT:READ B
50 WHILE B<>99999
60 POKE X,B:X=X+2
70 READ B
80 WEND
100 DATA &H601A,&H0000,&H0180,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000,&H0000
120 DATA &H0000,&H0000,&H487A,&H00DE,&H3F3C,&H0009,&H4E41,&H3F3C,&H0007,&H4E41,&H4267,&H487A
130 DATA &H00EF,&H3F3C,&H004E,&H4E41,&H41FA,&H00F6,&H3018,&HC0FC,&H0006,&HD0C0,&H4267,&H2F08
140 DATA &H3F3C,&H003D,&H4E41,&H3F00,&H4DFA,&H01CA,&H2F0E,&H2F3C,&H0000,&H8000,&H3F00,&H3F3C
160 DATA &H003F,&H4E41,&H4FEF,&H000C,&H3F3C,&H003E,&H4E41,&H4FF9,&H0007,&HFFF0,&H41EE,&H0038
170 DATA &H43FA,&HFFA2,&H7013,&H32D8,&H51C8,&HFFFC,&H32FC,&H4E75,&H243C,&H0000,&H0200,&H262E
190 DATA &H0002,&H0483,&H0000,&H0044,&H41EE,&H001C,&H43EE,&H0060,&H6100,&HFF7A,&H206E,&H0002
200 DATA &H4DEE,&H001C,&HD1CE,&H43EE,&H09D0,&H2288,&H4EAE,&H0342,&H4EAE,&H0092,&H4EAE,&H00E4
220 DATA &H4EAE,&H01BC,&H303C,&H021C,&H916E,&H024A,&H916E,&H021C,&H916E,&H02A4,&H41FA,&HFE46
230 DATA &H2F48,&H0004,&H4EAE,&H01E8,&H4EAE,&H0244,&H43E9,&H001C,&H41FA,&H0046,&H3018,&H2458
250 DATA &HD5C9,&H3498,&H5340,&H66F6,&H4EAE,&H0276,&H1B45,&H496E,&H7365,&H7274,&H2067,&H616D
260 DATA &H6520,&H6469,&H736B,&H2061,&H6E64,&H2070,&H7265,&H7373,&H2061,&H206B,&H6579,&H002A
280 DATA &H2E2A,&H004D,&H504C,&H2053,&H5331,&H3620,&H344A,&H4200
```

ST BASIC MK1 CHEAT DATA FOR ARMY MOVES

```
310 REM INFINITE LIVES FOR ARMY MOVES.
315 REM ADD THE FOLLOWING DATA TO THE ST BASIC CONTROL ROUTINE.
320 DATA 5,0,&H012E,&H317C,0,&H0130,&H4E71,0,&H0132,&H3019
330 DATA 0,&H0134,&H4EE9,0,&H0136,&HFFDB
340 DATA &H6175,&H746F,&H5C6C,&H6F61,&H642E,&H7072,&H6700,99999
350 BSAVE "ARMY_CHT.PRG",CHEAT,512
```

ST BASIC CHEAT ROUTINE FOR SPACE HARRIER

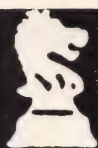
```
310 REM PROTECTIVE SHIELD FOR SPACE HARRIER
315 REM ADD THE FOLLOWING DATA TO THE ST BASIC CONTROL ROUTINE.
320 DATA 1,0,&HD84C,&H604A
340 DATA &H6175,&H746F,&H5C61,&H2E70,&H7267,0,99999
350 BSAVE "SH_CHEAT.PRG",CHEAT,512
```

ST BASIC CHEAT ROUTINE FOR OVERLANDER

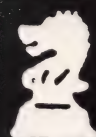
```
310 REM INFINITE MONEY,LIVES AND FUEL FOR OVERLANDER
315 REM ADD THE FOLLOWING DATA TO THE ST BASIC CONTROL ROUTINE.
320 DATA 6,0,&H65BE,&H2039,0,&H65A4,&H4E71,0,&H6B8E,&H60E2
330 DATA 0,&H6C3C,&H2039,0,&H78C4,&H4A6C,0,&HBAC8,&H4A68
340 DATA &H6175,&H746F,&H5C72,&H756E,&H2E70,&H7267,0,99999
350 BSAVE "AUTO\OVER_CHT.PRG",CHEAT,512
360 REM THIS PROGRAM MUST BE PLACED IN AN AUTO FOLDER
370 REM TO USE IT PLACE THE CHEAT DISK IN DRIVE A AND RESET
380 REM WHEN REQUESTED INSERT OVERLANDER DISK AND PRESS A KEY
```

ST BASIC CHEAT ROUTINE FOR WIZBALL

```
280 REM PROTECTIVE SHIELD FOR WIZBALL
285 REM ADD THE FOLLOWING DATA TO THE ST BASIC UNIVERSAL CHEAT ROUTINE.
300 DATA 5,0,&HA4,&H41F9,0,&HAA,&H317C,0,&HAC,&H038E,0,&HAE,&H2C4E
310 DATA 0,&HB0,&H4ED0,&H6175,&H746F,&H5C77,&H697A,&H6C6F,&H6164
320 DATA &H2E70,&H7267,0,99999
330 BSAVE "AUTO\WIZBALL.PRG",CHEAT,256
340 REM THE ABOVE PROGRAM MUST BE PLACED IN AN AUTO FOLDER.
350 REM TO USE,INSERT THE CHEAT DISK IN DRIVE A THEN RESET THE ATARI.
360 REM WHEN PROMPTED INSERT WIZBALL DISK AND PRESS A KEY
```

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Choose from 33 European squads. The 4 UK home countries have 16 man squads which can be increased to 36 with players of your own. A customisation program will allow squads for any of the 33 countries to be created.

HEAD COACH v3

On the field 220lb blocks of concrete-on-legs collide, while a small man in a suit paces the touchline stroking his chin. He's the Head Coach. He has more tactical skill in his little finger than the MCC can muster in the entire club. Third down and 9, he signals to his quarterback. The quarterback takes the snap back into the pocket dummies to his star running back, wheels to the right skirting two defenders, motions to throw to his rightside wide receiver and then swings his pass back over the pack to his open Tight End. He catches and makes another five yards before being grounded. An eleven yard gain and another first down, thanks to 2 hours of rehearsal the previous Thursday afternoon. The crowd cheer the quarterback but the head coach knows that his Right Guard really deserves the credit. This is American Football, Chess with mobile human pieces.

It's your first season as a Head Coach in the NFL and you face two pre-season games. You must give as many of your 45 players a run out to see how they've come through the close season. Through these matches and the time spent at training camp you must devise your game plan to face your first NFL game. Over the next 16 games you will meet the likes of the Chicago Bears, the Washington Redskins, the Dallas Cowboys, the LA Raiders (hiss). Each game will need a new plan to exploit the weaknesses and nullify the strengths of such teams, and in the game you will probe their defense and try to stifle their offense. Success over these 16 matches will put you into the playoffs and in sight of the Superbowl. Failure will give you the best of the college draft, which will allow you to make up for the deficiencies you must by now have discovered in your side. Providing of course that the club keeps you on . . .

Let us be straight, Head coach v3 is NOT an arcade game. It's a sophisticated game based on American Football. For those who already understand something about the game, it's a chance to find out just how much they really know. For those to whom the game appeals but is something of a mystery, then Head Coach v3 is the ideal way to find out what the game is all about. In the match itself, you have a choice of 27 offensive plays and 21 defensive plays, and so you can bias your plays to suit the skills of your squad and negate those of the opposition. The training camp will give you an insight into the current performance of your players, even checking their speed in 40 yard sprints. There's only one thing that can prevent your team from eventually achieving a Superbowl place; YOU! But we warn you, this game is ADDICTIVE.

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DUNGEON MASTER EDITOR

The ultimate cheat routine

Dungeon Master must be one of the best selling games on the ST - if not THE best! Ever since its release, way back in March, the game has constantly been in the top of the software charts. The game's success has created a cult following and with it a whole host of people calling for help. Speculation about the availability of a dungeon editor has been rife, although all claims have been false... until now!

Dungeon Master, having been available for sometime now, has been supposedly accurately mapped. Ed, however, did not have a floorplan to fall back on, so instead, he decided to see if the game could be modified in any way. Ed explained how he tried looking at the program's code. The first problem he encountered was the game's immense security protection. The second hurdle was poking the game, if he had actually changed the original code of the game he may not have been able to change it back, thus rendering the game totally useless. Ed decided to look at the save-game files which *Dungeon Master* produces. At first, he randomly changed the data, stopping and starting as he tested out the amended files. After many hours of only moderate success, Ed noticed that some of the coding formed patterns. Could these be the maps of the dungeon? Ed explained how, if he changed the code within these patterns, it was possible to create new passages or walls. Combining his previous knowledge with this new find, Ed soon managed to amend the blueprint of the dungeon.

Of course, wading through thirty-two kilobytes of data takes time; Ed spent six months developing the editor, sometimes staying awake nearly all night! Ed told me how he wanted to make his editor as easy to use as possible, and for this reason he made the program GEM compatible. After making all the necessary enhancements Ed took his effort along to the PC show, where, after showing the program to various companies, he decided to sign a contract with Softex.

Having met Ed and talked to him about his remarkable program, I decided to see just how good his editor was. I loaded my copy of *Dungeon Master*, chose my four heroes and then saved my game. Having set up the editor I proceeded to load in the save game file. Sure enough, at the click of a mouse button, a map for any of the fifteen levels was revealed. Not only could I view any of the dungeon levels, but by using the mouse, I could also create



Ed Penman displays just some of the 32K datafile he had to crack.

Like many other *Dungeon Master* freaks, Ed Penman found the game both frustrating and infuriating. Anybody who has been captivated by *Dungeon Master* will know the thrill of solving a puzzle or killing a monster, followed by the sheer madness of turning a corner only to be slaughtered by yet another creature. Having reached level five, Ed incorrectly assumed he must be near the end of the game. As he played on, the dungeon slowly revealed its size.

new passages or walls. Doors, too, were no longer a problem. By selecting an option from one of the menu bars it was possible to change all of the doors to ones which could be activated by pressing a button. This useful routine certainly comes in handy - especially if you use a TV or can't find an elusive key! Doors, of course, are not the only barrier would-be *Dungeon Masters* can come up against. Secret rooms can provide useful provisions to help adventurers - these sanctuaries, however, are somewhat difficult to find. Again, by selecting an option from a menu bar, I was able to open up all the secret rooms, allowing me to grab all the goodies I had previously missed.

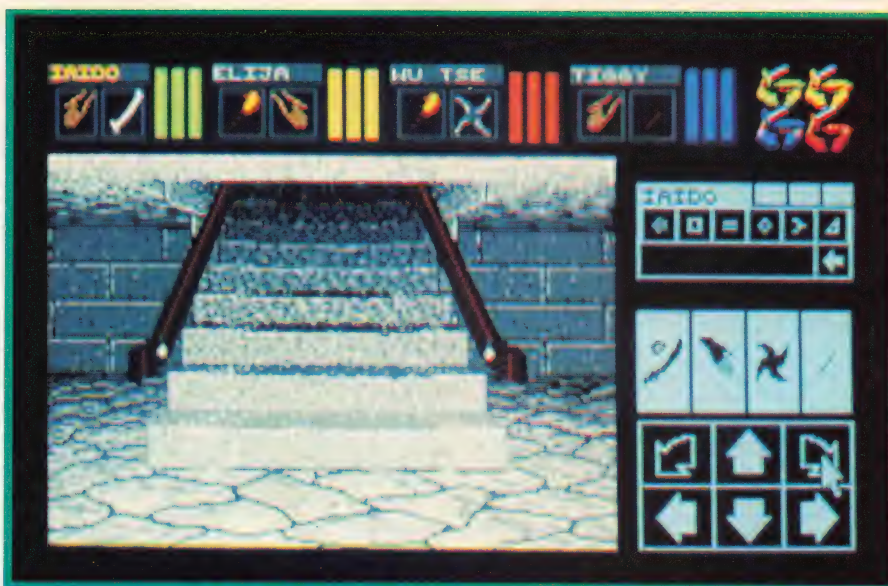
Although the editor is a powerful program, it is not possible to completely change the layout of the levels. Stairs must stay in their designated positions; radical restructuring of the dungeon can be somewhat hazardous resulting in the program crashing. Ed was quick to point out that the term "editor" was only loosely used - he prefers to call his program a cheat routine. The program may be used to only help solve certain problems or, if you wish, to create passages that bypass all of the hazards. I would recommend the program is used conservatively as the game's charisma can easily be destroyed.

I asked Ed whether the program would be compatible with future *Dungeon Master* products, such as the next five levels. He seemed to think not, but as he had already mastered the save-game structure, he saw no reason why an upgrade disk wouldn't become available.

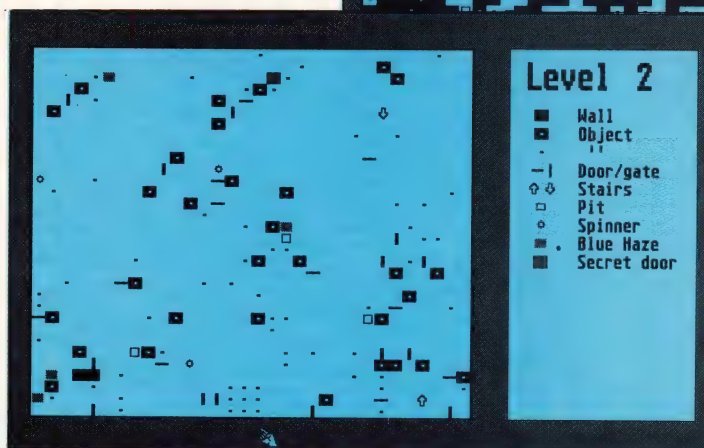
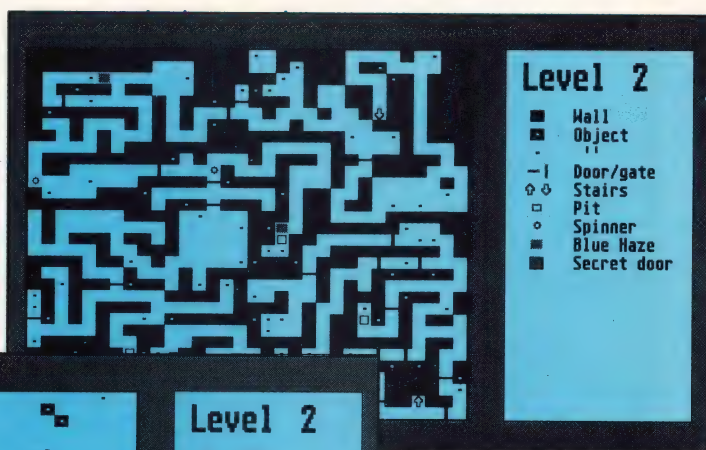
Finally, I asked whether he had solved the "put the gem back" puzzle. Apparently, if you pull the nearby lever and retrieve the gem, you must then stand well back and throw it through the portcullis. If you manage to cast the gem back onto its original square, the portcullis will open, allowing further exploration of the dungeon.

The editor, provisionally named - "*Dungeon Master Editor* - The Ultimate Cheat Routine", will be released at the Christmas Atari show, and will be available on the Softex label for a mere £9.95; together with the program there will be a set of hints, tips and puzzle solutions.

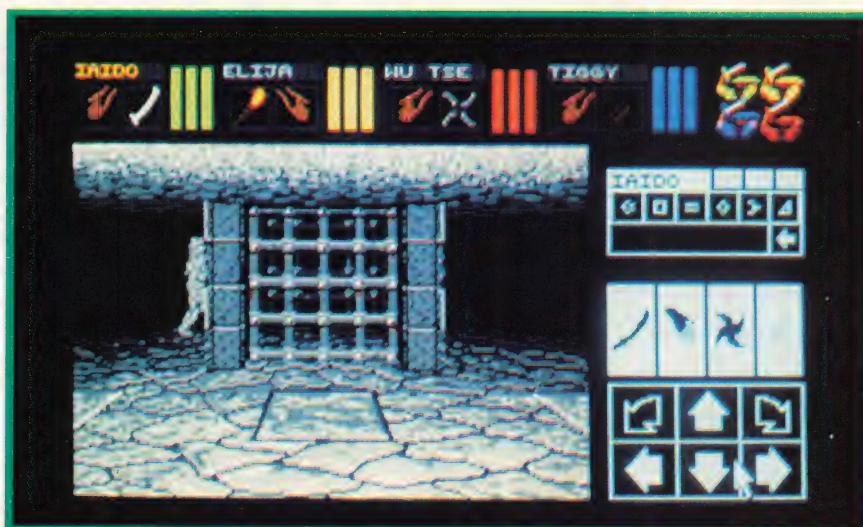
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(Above) As you can see, the editor can produce some wierd effects.



Level two of the dungeon, before and after the ST Action demolition team got to work.



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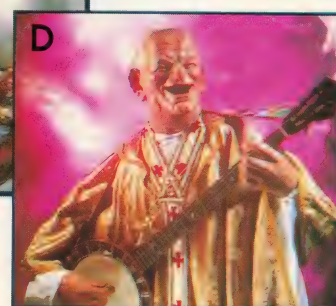
The best impressionist will win a life-size Spitting Image puppet of him or herself, with the rest of the contestants each winning Domark goodie-bags full of sweatshirts, games etc..

There are also plenty of runners-up prizes too: 20 Spitting Image books, 5 Spitting Image videos and 2 pairs of Spitting Image slippers.

All you have to do is answer the simple questions below and post your entry form to the ST Action offices to reach us by **10 December 1988.**

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1) Name the personalities caricatured by these Spitting Image puppets.



2) Who are the people responsible for the Spitting Image puppets?

- a) Chuck and Thaw
- b) Fluck and Law
- c) Buck and Moore

3) What is the name of the film star reading ST Action who also features in another soon-to-be-released Domark title?



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COMPETITION WINNERS

Elite's Balloon Competition

The six winners of the balloon trip from the grounds of the Earl of Lichfield are as follows: K A Grant, Rayners Lane; Scott Forrester, Moortown; Craig Haslingden, Bolton; David Brown, London SW2; D Gill, Buxton and Simon New from Tipton. Congratulations to you six, and good luck with the balloon trip.

Now for the runners-up prizes of 20 Elite T-shirts and copies of Space Harrier. They are: Keith Ward, Leigh; Simon Wiles, Denmead; Paul Flynn, Hull; Nathan Wheelhouse, Gleadless; Jonathan Nicholas, Cardiff; Daniel Morley, Sittingbourne; Chris Downs, South Shields; Karl Eynon, Shrewsbury; John Smith, Hambledon; Stephen Holcroft, Newton le Willows; Jonathan Elliot, Trowbridge; R J Pearce, Bristol; Paul Jackson, Norwich; Neil Lovell, Huntingdon; Gaston Smit, Boxtel, Holland; Dennis Hooft, Breda, Holland; Graeme Melville, Errol; Karl Stokes, Ossett; R Oliver, Stamford and, last but not least, Glenn Turner from Crediton. Well done all of you.

The answers were:

1.

- a) Buggy Boy b) Overlander*
- c) Space Harrier*

2. b) Hot air is lighter than cold air

3. Buggy Boy, Space Harrier, Bombjack

Hotshot Competition

The five lucky winners of a day out at Combat Zone are John Shearing, Godstone; Stephen Barber, Lymington; G Fisher, Swineshead; Neil Watson, Staines and John Smith of Hambledon.

The runners-up prizes of Hotshot games go to: G Dixon, Wigton; S Keeping, Ashford; B Shimmings, St. Leonards-on-Sea; R Birchall, Brighton; J Pritchard, Braintree; R Heath, Leek; R Coppinger, South Woodham; W Palgrave-Moore, Norfolk; W Porter, Highfields; A Hopcroft, Eastwood; K Little, Taunton; Niels Gudegast, Marple; S Candler, Dringhouses; G Turner, Crediton; D MacAllister, Belfast; P Willey, Bradford; T Bird, Gillingham; R Oliver, Stamford; G Melville, Errol; B Brand, Perth; C Davidson, Carlisle; B Dark, Hanwell; M de Sousa, London NW2; S Andrews, Billesley and M Lacey, Retford. Congratulations to all of you.

Once again, congratulations to the winners and commiserations to all who entered but were unfortunate enough not to win. Better luck next time.

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Super Conductor is ideal for performers, allowing them to hold up to 10 different songs in memory at once and quickly change from song to song and to play and edit. SOUND ON SOUND magazine (August 1987) says "Super Conductor really must get the thumbs up as it is a very powerful music program at quite a remarkably low price".

Each song buffer has its own individualized settings for its tempo and song structure information. Blocks may be copied from one song buffer to another at will.

The Super Conductor main menu displays the names of the ten songs currently held in memory and gives access to the System Exclusive data transfer mode. This versatile feature allows MIDI synthesizer voices and data to be transferred and saved on disk. The simplified data storage method allows the System Exclusive data to be edited using a wordprocessor.

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NEW REPLAY SOUND EDITOR SOFTWARE VERSION 4

After the runaway success of the REPLAY sound sampling package by 2-BIT SYSTEMS Ltd., comes a new release of the sound editor software. Completely re-written, REPLAY 4.0 is the result of listening to the requirements of you, the end users of REPLAY. Here are just some of the new features to be found in the new version 4 software:-

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The package also contains a much modified and improved version of the ECHO program, now called EFFECTS.

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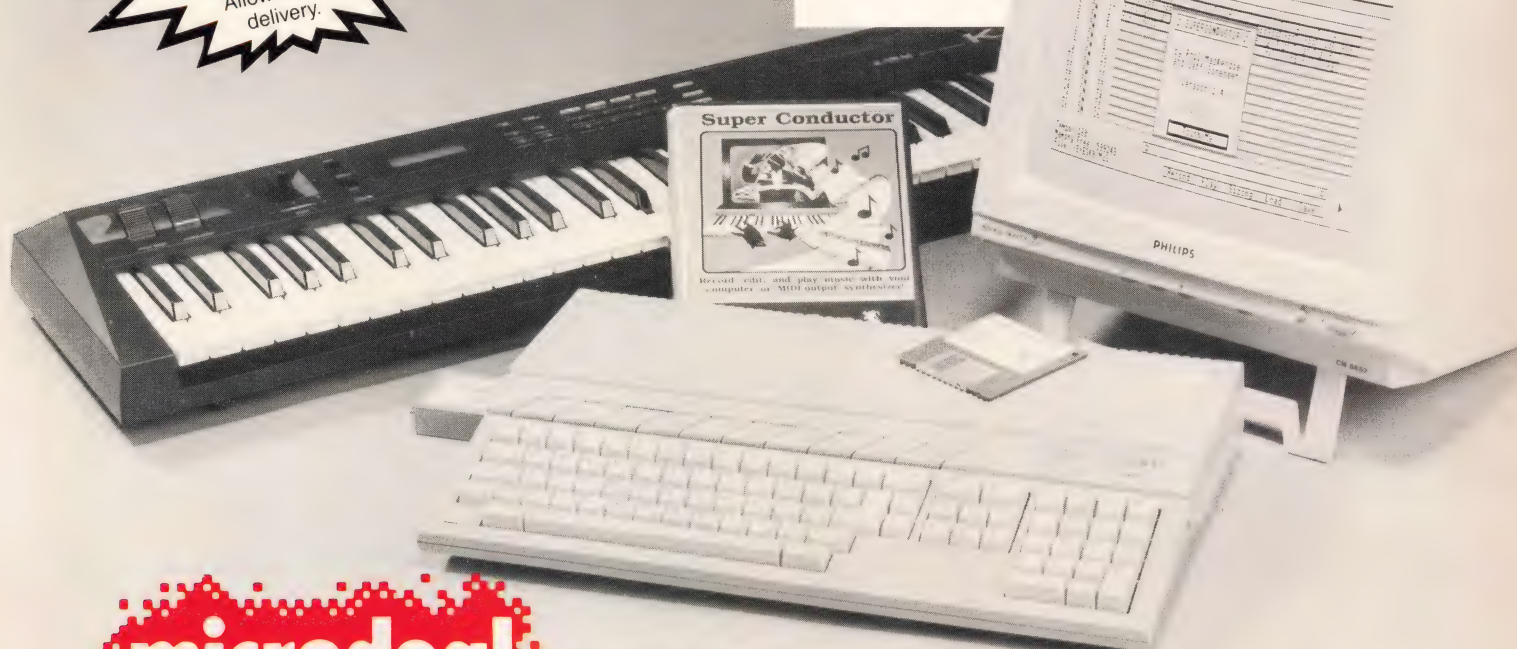
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"With event after event of vigorous joystick waggling, athletics simulations have a reputation for being joystick wreckers, with little regard for the skill of the sport. Apart from a highly developed waggling arm and an excuse to buy a new joystick, what do these games have to offer?"

DALEY'S CHALLENGE

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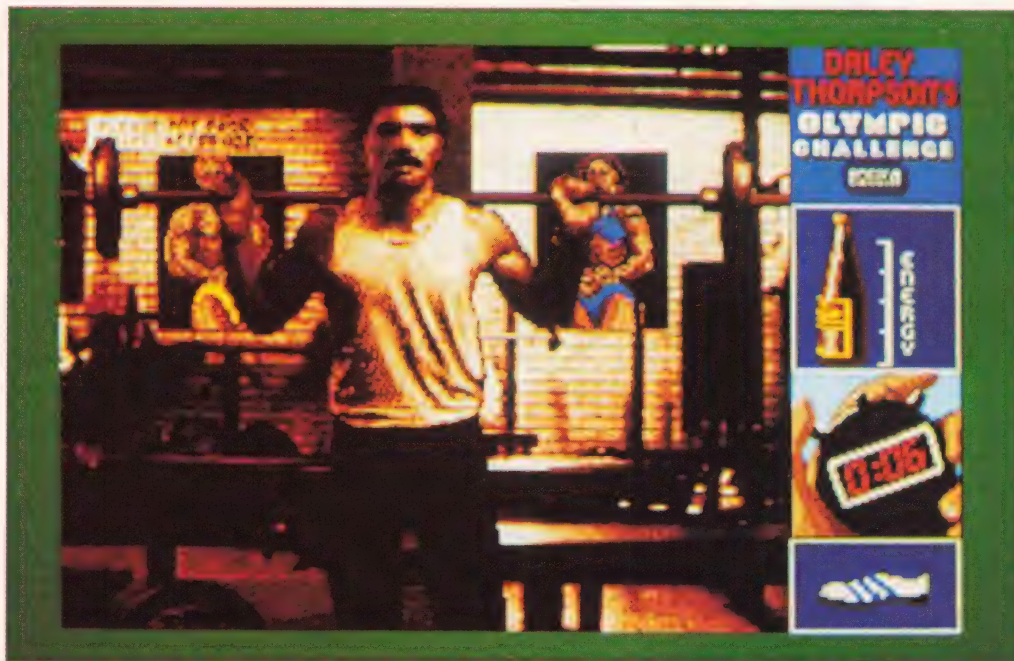
There have been a number of sporting simulations which have been endorsed by famous athletes, but the character of the sportsman has never shone through the unrecognizable blob of pixels on screen. Reputed to be the greatest athlete in the world, and certainly the most endearing character in the athletics fraternity, Daley Thompson has achieved phenomenal success by combining fitness and strength with technique and tactics. The Seoul Olympics will be remembered for its dramas and disappointments as well as its triumphs, but Ocean present you with the opportunity to forget the disqualification and disasters of the Decathlon event and help Daley bring the gold back to Britain.

The game contains all ten events in the Decathlon competition. But first we join Daley in the gym for training and exercise. You begin the workout with squats and as Daley concentrates on his legs, this gives you the opportunity to get that joystick-waggling arm limbered up. Confusingly, an empty bottle of Lucozade slowly fills up as Daley uses his time effectively in the gym - no wonder Lucozade sponsor Daley, the guy actually produces

This is the most difficult and exhausting athletics simulation I have ever played. Yet again, frantic and vigorous joystick waggling plays a major part in every event. Whilst testing the game in the ST Action office, cries of 'I'm knackered' summed up our feelings. The presentation is excellent and this is the first game to use digitized photography effectively and successfully. After hours of joystick waggling, you may not qualify as the world's greatest athlete, but you'll be able to crack a walnut between your forearm and biceps.

JS

the stuff! Swift, rhythmic joystick movements are best and you are awarded a can of the golden elixir for good training results. Daley manages to squeeze in a few plugs for another sponsor, as you choose which type of 'ADIDAS' footwear to wear for each event. Failure to make the correct decision results in an inferior performance.



Training and exercise is an integral part of any sport, but while Daley is toning up his entire physique, all that joystick waggling is giving you forearms like Popeye!

The competition begins with the Long Jump and the game screen is split in two with a digitized picture of Daley and an overhead view of the long jump pit. Wagging the joystick starts Daley's descent down the runway and the faster you waggle the faster he runs. Looking at the overhead view, you must judge when Daley's foot will hit the white board and pressing the firebutton makes him leap. The jump is disqualified if his foot crosses the white line before take-off. The 100 metre, 400 metre, 1500 metre and 110 metre hurdles are the four track events which feature in the Decathlon, and with the exception of the hurdles, each race shows a close up picture of Daley and an aerial view of the track. Naturally, the joystick-waggling technique differs for each event, with a short and fast burst in the sprint and slower, more rhythmic movements for endurance in the 1500m. The 110 metre hurdles shows a side view of Daley and again, you must waggle the joystick quickly for speed and press the firebutton to jump the hurdles.

Now for the event which led to Daley's downfall - the Pole Vault. First you must select the height of the bar by pushing the

joystick upwards and then Daley is positioned on the runway ready for the vault. Wagging the joystick more tentatively builds up power and as he nears the vault, pressing the firebutton lowers the pole. Daley will spring up towards the jump and you must press the firebutton again to release the pole. Timing the lowering and





Anabolic steroids won't help you in the track events - I mean, there is only so much a joystick can take!



release of the pole correctly is crucial to the success of the vault. One of Daley's favourite disciplines is the Javelin. You build up speed before the throw in the usual way and as Daley nears the end of the run-up, pressing the firebutton breaks his stride in preparation for the throw. The javelin rises and releasing the firebutton sets the angle of flight (approximately 45 degrees) and releases the javelin.

Success in the High Jump relies heavily on strategy - whether to jump or sit it out and let the other competitors set the heights and fail.

The fact that you cannot lower the bar during the event should be taken into consideration when selecting the height. After building up speed for the run up, you press and hold the firebutton as close to

the bar as possible and release to complete the jump.

The last two throwing events take

us to the Shot Put and Discus circles. The Shot Put circle appears at the top of the screen with the throwing area displayed beneath. By way of a change in this event, waggling the joystick with the firebutton released increases Daley's leg power as he shuffles across the circle. Then pressing the firebutton transfers the power to his arm for the throw. In the discus throw, joystick waggling causes Daley to spin

round and the skill is to build up maximum momentum and release the firebutton to throw. Finally, whether Daley achieves a triumphant victory or suffers a miserable

If you want forearms the size of Popeye's, then go and buy this now. If, like me, you don't - give it a miss. Although I normally like these 'Decathlon' games, Daley's Olympic Challenge is far too gruelling to play. It requires waggling which is beyond human capacity, and this kills the gameplay stone dead. There was a great deal of potential with this licence and, sadly, it hasn't been utilised to the full, with only the digitized graphics deserving a favourable mention. An over-hard game - give me a bottle of Lucozade any time.

SM

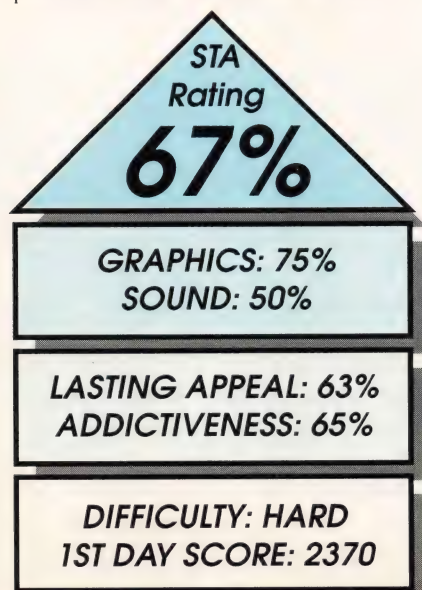
Oh, the joys of licensing! Once again, Ocean have managed to sign the might of Daley Thompson - pulling in the advertising of both Adidas and Lucozade in the process. Whilst Daley's first computer appearance was something of a Track'n'Field clone, this new game manages to maintain the high programming standards while introducing a new graphical image. However, the joystick bashing and arm-ache remain, causing Daley Thompson's Olympic Challenge to be one of the most physical games to date.

Personally, although I was very impressed with the new graphics, I found the sound only adequate and the gameplay very difficult. DT Olympic Challenge is a must for any would-be body-builders, but make sure you have a generous supply of joysticks.

NC

failure, you can be sure that it makes The 'Daley' Papers.

STA



Like all the events, the digitized picture of Daley in the Long Jump is fully controllable as he hurtles along the run up.

This game has all of the hallmarks of one that has been re-hosted from another machine. I am not overly fond of such games, as they tend not to make good use of the facilities available on the new machine - in this case the Atari. This is true of Empire. The graphics don't do justice to the Atari and are hard to decipher on a TV screen - the sound is abysmal. All in all, a very poor looking game, AND I LOVED IT! I found Empire very addictive and had difficulty stopping in order to go to bed. Where would the next attack come from? What should I build - armies, aircraft - what? This game is just what the doctor ordered for the wargamer who likes strategic rather than tactical games.

SK

The object of the game is simple - destroy the armies of your opponent and capture all the world's cities. The game may be played between two or three players - two of whom can be played by the computer. At your command will be armies, aircraft and ships of many types.

Initially you are faced with a blank map which is slowly filled in as your troops advance across the unknown regions. As you conquer cities, you will be able to use them to produce more weapons of war to help you spread even further. Meanwhile, under the cover of the dark areas, your enemies will also be spreading like a black plague towards you. Eventually the screen will flash the message that enemy troops have landed in one of your outposts and battle will be joined.

The initial attraction of this game is that you can boot up and begin to play almost immediately. Before embarking upon most war games, you generally need to spend an evening reading at least three manuals. Happily this is not the case in Empire. True, you will need to decide whether you wish your captured city to produce armies, planes or ships, but essentially that's all there is to it. The majority of decisions are made via the mouse, and while you can sit and ponder for as long as you like, things tend to move very quickly once you have made your decisions. This is in no sense an arcade game as it has negligible sound

STA
Rating

70%

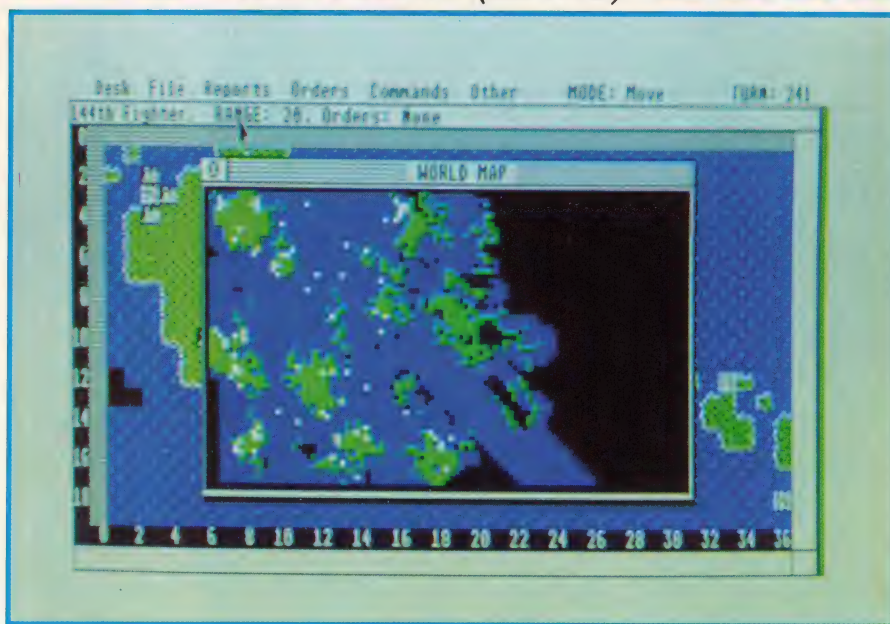
TEXT/GRAPHICS: 50%
GAMEPLAY: 65%

LASTING APPEAL: 60%
ADDICTIVENESS: 85%

"What the Atari ST needs is a war game which will appeal to both the average game-player and the war simulation enthusiast. Perhaps Empire is the game which can finally break through the boredom barrier and put the thrill into strategy."

EMPIRE

MEDIAGENIC (£24.95)



Carefully plan your tactics of World domination and your Empire will soon become all powerful.

The box bears a health hazard warning to the effect that the contents can become addictive. Unlike most claims of this kind, I suspect that this one is telling the truth. The game is easy to get into, but it still has the depth which can keep you coming back for many months. Quick-action arcade games can quickly lose their appeal, but games such as this can challenge you for a long time.

AM

and little in the way of action sequences, but the game-play is such that it is much more appealing to non-strategy fans than the usual war game. The icons representing troops and war vehicles scuttle over the map as they carry out the orders of the various players. Aircraft sent out on reconnaissance missions, by generals who paid scant attention to the problem of fuel resources, have the habit of diving into the ocean whilst you are busy defending a city elsewhere.

The game is played in a series of turns. At the start of each turn you may issue orders to each of your separate armies - which normally means telling them which direction to move in. When you have finished this section, all the troops will move and you will see the fresh areas of the map fill in revealing the new landscape. The results of battles are decided upon quickly by the computer, with no special graphic sequences. There are also many special commands which you can use to speed up the issuing of these orders. Group Orders are used to give the same set of orders to large groups. Flight Plans can be given which ensures that newly created aircraft will automatically fly

to a given war front and the Escort Duty order means that whole fleets will follow the transport ships. There are a few tables of data to help you keep track of your troops, but there are fewer of these than is usual for these games.

STA



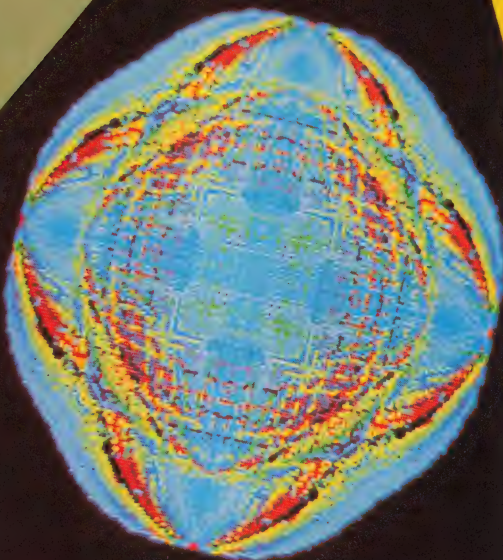
Trip--TRON

LIGHT SYNTHESISER



CONTROL PANEL

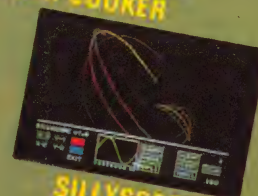
HOW THE MEREAK
VIDEO & TV
TRIP-A-TRON GRAPHICS
WITH MANTER
ELECTRONIC MUSIC
ADRIAN WAGNER
(52 MINUTES)



EVENT SEQUENCER



COLOUR COOKER



SILLYSCOPE



DISK ACCESS



STARFIELD EDIT



KML LANGUAGE

TRIP-A-TRON
converts the ATARI ST
into an instrument on which you
(and your mouse) can produce flowing
patterns of light and iridescent colour, and match
the display to any music.

THE RESULT is fascinating - pleasure enhanced by knowing that
your sequences can be saved and enjoyed again or used as performance art at a
disco or by a group.

SOON THE LIGHT-SYNTHESIST COULD BE UP THERE WITH THE GUITAR HEROES.

TRIP-A-TRON runs on any version of the ST. It is in a form which is instantly useable. It has its own
programming language, KML, and beautifully designed pop-up screens, helping you create an *infinity* of
unique effects.

TRIP-A-TRON comes on two discs, with a comprehensive 145 page manual in an A5 ring binder.

LLAMASOFT

Price - £34.95

(£24.95 to ST COLOURSPACE owners who return their COLOURSPACE disks to Llamasoft)

LLAMASOFT 49 MOUNT PLEASANT TADLEY HANTS RG26 6BN TEL: 07356 4478

"Travel back to the Age of Chivalry when knights were bold, galloping across the countryside and rescuing damsels in distress. Dragons, Black Knights and mind-boggling puzzles lie in wait for you behind colourful graphic screens."

LANCELOT

MANDARIN (£19.95)

After spending weeks pouring over the many old tomes of Arthurian legends, Level 9 claim to have produced the first adventure which attempts to faithfully re-enact the exploits of Lancelot. This is a three-part adventure which culminates in the valiant knight's quest for the Holy Grail. The game is crammed to bursting point with acres of text which describes life in the Middle Ages. In typical Level 9 style there are countless locations to explore and muddy paths to wander. There is also a host of 'intelligent' characters wandering around the game and you are free to quiz and order them around. The screens are lavishly illustrated with colourful digitised graphics which also help to bring the game to life. Initially, the whole of the game's landscape is

open to your wanderings and there appear to be very few obstacles put in your path. The useful 'GO TO' command is again included and this enables you to automatically move to a distant location without having to remember the route.

This is a game for a no-nonsense adventurer who likes his text straight from the shoulder. It's square-jawed and serious stuff, punctuated by the usual mindless walk-on characters who salute you and munch buttered fish - seemingly oblivious to the fact that you are currently having your head bashed in! It has the air of authenticity and studious research about it, but I personally would have preferred a bit more sparkle and fun.

AM

With a fair damsel and a friendly knight at your side, your initial task is to rescue a group of knights from the clutches of various rogues. In addition to rescuing everything that moves, Lancelot must act as a real goody-goody at all times or he will lose points. At the merest glimpse of a

cross you had better hit the dirt and start knocking-out those prayers! Should a damsel with a low-cut dress appear, grit your teeth and throw yourself into the nearest cold river or you will

STA
Rating

75%

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 80%
GAMEPLAY: 75%

LASTING APPEAL: 70%
ADDICTIVENESS: 70%



never make it as a Knight of the Round Table.

Having proved your valour and been subsequently knighted by the King, you can then ensure that the age

of chivalry is not dead by frolics with the Queen! Oh well - nobody's perfect.

To coincide with the launch of the game, Level 9 have hidden a £5000, seven-inch-high copy of the Grail somewhere in England. Crafted in silver and gold, the Grail is encrusted with semi-precious stones and mounted on an oak block. Details of the quest will be given shortly.

STA



Become the chivalrous Lancelot in Level 9's latest three - part Arthurian adventure.

ARCADE ACTION

From the SNK stable, the coin-op smash hit now for your home micro. This multi-level, vertically scrolling arcade thriller throws you deep

into the jungles and ruined cities of a nation held in the grip of a cruel oppressor. Freedom is your aim... Guerrilla War is the means!



GUERRILLA

WAR



ATARI ST
£19.95

AMIGA
£24.95

IK+, a one - against - two beat'em - up, set against one of the best (not to mention animated) backdrops in a computer game.

STAI



With its fluid animation, terrific sound and ease of play, IK+ has got to be the one game you buy this month - it really is brilliant. The moves, though initially confusing, are extremely well implemented, and the learning curve is set just at the right setting. The graphics are good, but you tend to get distracted by the inhabitants of the backdrops: Pacman running; spiders spinning; and inch worms... well, inching, I suppose! The sound consists of amazing 'grunts', 'thwacks' and 'smacks' and sometimes I found myself cringing as one of the opponents stuck a foot in my fighter's mouth. With its many options and its two-player mode, IK+ will keep you going for a long, long time.

SM

"With its fists clenched and its left leg raised in a deadly kick, IK+ smashes its way onto the Atari ST - and how!"



IK+

SYSTEM 3 (£19.95)

The original 8-bit International Karate was written by 'Dropzone' programmer, Archer Maclean, several years back, and was promptly met with much praise. A little while after, Atari launched the ST, and one of the first games to trickle onto it was Andromeda's conversion of the aforementioned. The conversion, though sporting attractive graphics and sound, was a pale imitation of the original, capturing none of the original's speed or atmosphere; and by all accounts, Archer wasn't happy with it.

Archer began work on the 8-bit upgrade, unoriginally named, IK+, and not wanting the same fate to befall his sequel, started the ST conversion himself.

IK+ is basically a one-against-two beat'em-up. The game, played against an attractive animated backdrop and complemented by an excellent re-mix of the original International Karate's music, has our on-screen, would-be Bruce Lee fighting his way through numerous opponents until he attains black belt status. Points are scored

The software industry must now be consider Karate games as "old hat". System 3, however, have other ideas. IK+ must be the definitive Karate game, the graphics are very detailed and so smooth too! Likewise, the Oriental sound effects complement the game nicely; even if they seem to drone on a little. The game is full of nice little extra touches which all help make the game stand out. The two-player option is great fun, as are the intermissions. IK+ is a must for both hardened beat'em-up fans and the more passive gamers alike.

NC



The white guy, having won, has his newly - aquired purple belt stolen by the jealous blue rival.

by connecting one of the seventeen possible moves onto your opponent's anatomy, with half the amount given if they are facing the other way. Hits can connect with the head, chest, stomach, shins and feet, and result in a suitably loud, digitised 'thwack', followed by another digitised sound: 'Ugh!'. Once hit, the guy will fall stunned, for a couple of seconds, losing valuable seconds of the thirty-second time limit. Points for hits are shown by white blobs at the top of the screen, with two blobs added for each successful hit. Additionally, you receive higher points for the more difficult moves.

A round ends when either a combatant has scored a full quota of blobs, or

if the timer runs out. When this happens, the fighter with the most hit blobs will win - something that is pointed out by the mystical referee who appears in a haze of twinkling stars. If you fail to come in the top two, you will be out; but if you win, you will receive a hundred points for each second remaining and will go on to the next, harder level. Every two levels you will encounter a bonus screen. There are two of these, each appearing alternately: the first has the player deflecting deadly, bouncing balls which appear from each side of the screen, and get faster and faster until the player is knocked over; the second has the player kicking ignited bombs, which also appear faster and faster. For every ball you deflect or bomb you kick, you will receive an

Wow! Bruce Lee eat your heart out. This is a game that makes you feel the pain when you get hit - the sound effects are unbelievable! As I have always found with hand-to-hand combat games, it always takes ages to get used to the controls. However, I found great enjoyment was to be had from this latest version of the very popular game genre. The sound effects, music and animation are certainly slick, and the small touches, such as, the Pacman, worm, snorkel and spider in the background, all make for a first class punch-'em-up game.

MM

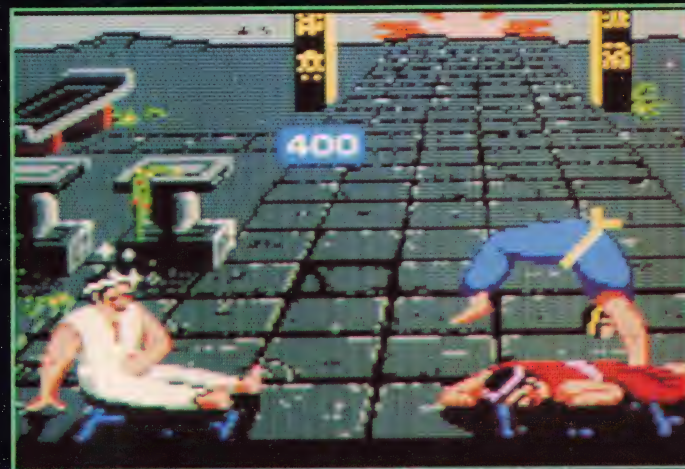
you, or they may just avoid you. But after level twenty-five, they adopt more vicious tendencies and both gang up on you.



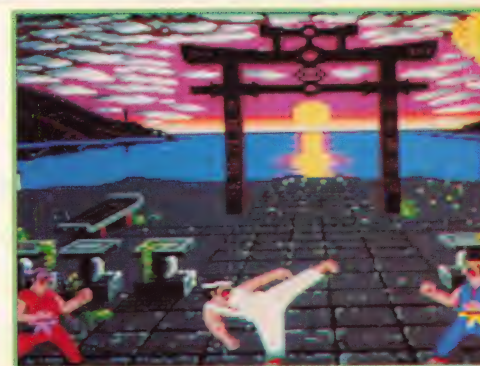
extra one-hundred points bonus, and mastery of these stages is a key factor of attaining a higher belt. Up and until level twenty-five, all of the fighters adopt roughly the same strategies. For instance they may fight against one another instead of

IK+ is extremely user-friendly, with a wealth of options available allowing the player to change the game to suit his own needs. You have a two-player game in which you can both duff up the computer-controlled guy; you can change the speed from 'Yawn' (extremely slow) to 'Turbo' (what hit me?); you can even change the colour of the backdrop! Another little... well, let's call it a quirk, is that if during play you were to nonchalantly press the 'T' key, your fighter's trousers would fall to his ankles - silly I know, but good for a laugh, anyway. Also, if you pause the game, six, choreographed fighters will appear, each showing all of the possible moves.

STA



One of the unique features of IK+ compared to other fighting games, is the way you can string several moves together. For instance: after the blue guy has recovered from the white's double head - kick (pic 1) he can somersault away (pic 2) , only to return with a nose -breaking face kick (pic 3).



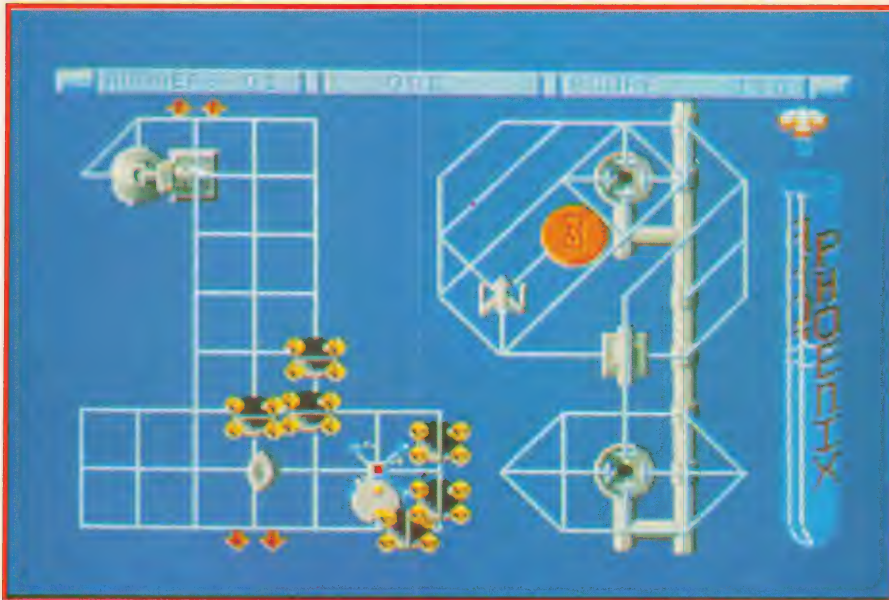
**STA
Rating
81%**

**GRAPHICS: 89%
SOUND: 78%**

**LASTING APPEAL: 72%
ADDICTIVENESS: 79%**

**DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 14956**

The spitter coughs up a constant flow of Tetroids into the arena but you have to blast them to release their sticky residue.



TETRAQUEST

MICRODEAL (£19.95)

"On Earth, different countries have, for centuries, been competing against each other in sport. One day, we may transcend the universe, and I wonder whether we will compete against the inhabitants of other planets? Microdeal think it is possible!"

The first Galactic Games are about to commence and the interplanetary athletes assemble in the arena. But wait, there is a problem which could put the entire games in jeopardy - and it isn't a positive drugs test either. The six legendary Phoenix tablets, which are crucial to the games, have been stolen by the inhabitants of the Tetradome who have been snubbed from the competition. The Tetroids have broken the tablets into sixty-four pieces and have spread them around the six provinces of their world. It is your task to enter the Tetradome and

find the Phoenix Tablets.

The pieces of the broken tablets are hidden in the quadrants, which house four separate screens. The game is played on screens which contain a plexus of rails on which your craft and a myriad of Tetroids can travel. Located near the centre of the network is a so-called 'Spitter' which, as its name suggests, spits the Tetroids into the arena. With the joystick you must move the craft around the network, avoiding the Tetroids, but first you must collect a golden coin which opens the entire network to you. Your adversaries are many and varied; Acid Tetrons spill a foul liquid which seeps through the levels and destroys parts of the quadrant, while oil-filled aliens leave treacherous and slippery patches which cause your craft to skid out of control. In contrast, sticky customers leave a gluey residue which seizes the Tetra.

On each of the levels, you must reach a gold coin, which is connected by gates that rotate, connecting and disconnecting sections of the network. Moving over the switches rotates the gates and there are the occasional Transporters which can hurl you to other quadrants. With the constant aggravation caused by the regenerating Tetroids, you must first move your craft through the teleports and gates to the coin which reveals the location of the tablet. The constant flow of Tetroids and the constricting restraints of the rails tests the speed of your reactions to the limit. But providing you gain

Tetra Quest is rather flat, bland and uninteresting in appearance, which means that it has to be played to be appreciated. If you can stand the absence of flashy 3D graphics and digitized sound effects, then Tetra Quest offers great arcade entertainment, with a hint of strategy. The residue and debris left by the defeated Tetroids is a sheer stroke of genius. Play the game before you form your opinion!

JS

Tetra Quest, to begin with, is a very confusing game, and it wasn't until someone showed me what I had to do, that I could play it properly - then I wished I hadn't bothered. For the most part, all of the levels look the same, giving the game a bland look, and the sound is minimal and ineffective. It will probably appeal to all you puzzle fans out there, but if I want to expand my grey matter, I'll stick to Imagework's 'Bombuzal', as it's easy to get into and addictive from the start.

SM

enough power, pressing the 'O' key and the firebutton simultaneously turns your craft into a Phoenix craft. Rapid Tetroid massacre can be achieved by manoeuvring the craft right next to the Spitter and aliens enter the arena straight into the line of fire. Additionally, widespread Tetroid destruction can be achieved if you destroy a certain type of adversary which leaves debris on the rails. This scrap metal acts as a deflector for your laser stream and, using your knowledge of the rail network, you can keep a constant stream of laser running around the screen.

STA



STA
Rating
55%

GRAPHICS: 49%
SOUND: 45%

LASTING APPEAL: 66%
ADDICTIVENESS: 56%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 3610

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"Sorcery +, after a two year break, appears on the ST, its pockets full of Brimstone. Will it hold you spellbound?"

Taking you back to the dark ages, a time of feuding Necromancers and Wizards, Sorcery + pits you, the last, free Sorcerer, against the evil forces of the Necromancer. All of your compatriots have been taken and locked up, and it is up to you to collect the correct objects to free them from their imprisonment. The game is split into two parts: the first involving the freeing of all ten of your friends; and the second - the '+' part of the game - depicting your attempts to destroy the Necromancer.

Your endeavours are shown over fifty-five flick-screens, and moving from location to location is done by exiting via the wooden doors in the corner of each screen. Each screen is inhabited by at least two nasties, and if these touch you, your energy level will be depleted. Should your energy get too low for your liking, you can always replenish it by squatting on top of a nearby cauldron - though I hate to think where the energy goes. Additionally, caution must be taken on reaching a cauldron, as some absorb your energy and, of course, if you run out of energy, you die - as you will if you fall in a river. Conveniently lying around the screens are the various objects needed to both kill the Necromancer's minions and to free your colleagues. To collect an item, you must position your Sorcerer over it and press fire, and if he is already in possession of an object, it will be swapped for the other one. Weapons are used in a similar fashion: when a creature touches you,

STA
Rating

59%

GRAPHICS: 60%
SOUND: 48%

LASTING APPEAL: 51%
ADDICTIVENESS: 61%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 30000

Deep in the Necromancer's lair, our intrepid Wizard prepares to free his chum.



SORCERY +

VIRGIN (£19.95)

Sorcery+ hasn't changed much since its original appearance on the eight-bit machines. Even then, I found the game tedious and frustrating, therefore I can't admit to having been excited when the game's sixteen-bit mutation arrived. The sound has improved marginally but the graphics still look exactly the same as they did on the Amstrad. Sure enough, the game will appeal to old die-hard fans but I feel that Virgin could have tried to produce something a little more worthwhile.

NC

I remember playing Sorcery + ages ago on my old Amstrad computer. It was an extremely playable game, and kept me up for several nights as I attempted to finish off the Necromancer. Then why is it, if I enjoyed it so much, that it seems boring and tired now? Perhaps it's due to the fact that nothing has changed and there are no obvious enhancements. The graphics, though pretty, are looking dated, and the sound consists of simple rasps and the occasional door creaking, and these combined factors make the program look about two years old. All the same, it's not too bad an arcade/adventure, it's just that it could and should have been better - a lot better.

SM

pressing fire will activate what you are holding and, if you are holding the right weapon, the monster will explode, giving the player a thousand points bonus.

You free your fellow sorcerers by opening their cages and touching them. When touched they will magically turn into a shooting star and make their way to your sanctuary.

When all eight are standing on their pedestals in the sanctuary, you will have enough combined mental energy to survive an encounter with the Necromancer. As he is 100% bad, the only thing that will have any effect on him will be the power of love and good, so the solution is to locate his lair and surround him with hearts. Both of these tasks must be completed within the time-limit, represented by a disappearing candle under the main playing area.

STA



--- STA 74 STA ---

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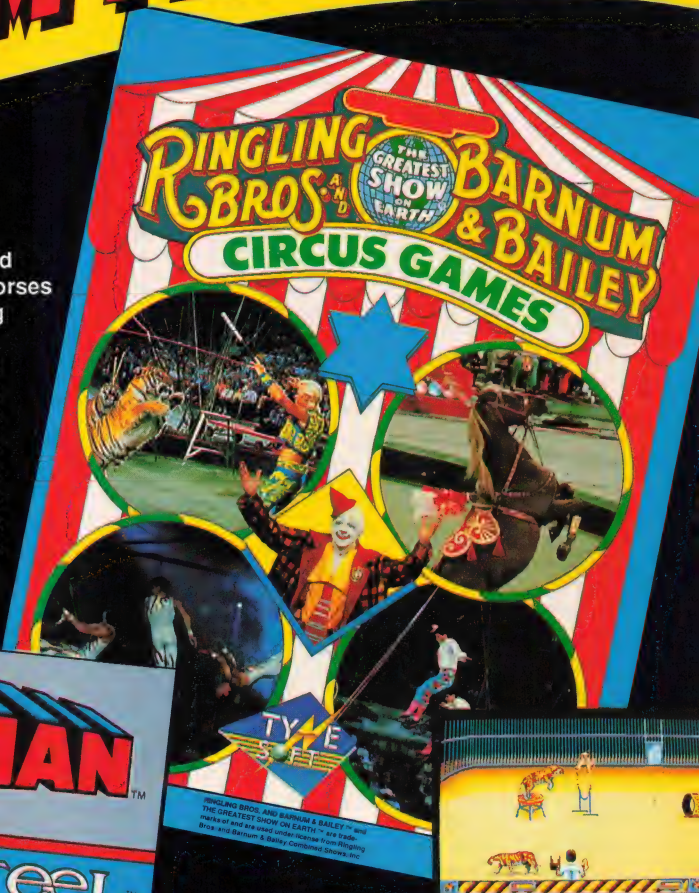


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BOMBUZAL

IMAGEWORKS (£19.95)

Bombuzal is simple in concept, but difficult in practice: explode all of the 120 levels' bombs and mines, within the strict, allocated time-limit, whilst avoiding any patrolling meanies. "Easy!", I hear you shout. "No it's not!", I reply. You see, the bombs have been laid out in such a manner that, if you are not careful, setting one off may cause the others to explode - killing you in the process. You begin with three lives, and these are lost if you are caught in an explosion, run out of time, or if you fall off the edge of the maze.

The game can be played in either isometric 3D or viewed from overhead, and begins with your rotund on-screen defuser appearing on the edge of the maze of bomb-covered tiles. During the course of the game you will encounter a wide assortment of tiles and bombs, with each having a different function. The first tile you will encounter is the cracked 'Dissolver'; it can be stood on for as long as is needed, but when you step off, it will disappear. The other tiles are met as you progress through the levels: riveted tiles, which survive an explosion - even if you don't; slot tiles, with which you can move bombs along; and ice tiles that

you cannot stop on. In later levels these tiles can be inhabited by all sorts of strange, but often useful items, such as: the cute-faced Skweek, who detonates the first bomb he finds; a temple which absorbs the explosions; a switch, which changes the layout of the maze; a teleport - useful for getting out of explosive situations; the fan-like Spinner (no, not a revolving folk singer!), which throws you off randomly; and the Bubble which, like the Skweek, will activate a bomb. The

bombs themselves don't differ a great deal, except in terms of size, and the damage they create. They come in small, medium, large, expanding and, finally, aerial, which, with its built-in satellite, will explode in sympathy with another. When a bomb explodes, if there is another in the vicinity, it can create a chain reaction, so great care, not to mention planning, must be taken. To

help in the planning of your safe route, pressing space will reveal a map. Sooner or later you will complete a level, and when you do, you will receive ten bonus points for every remaining tile.

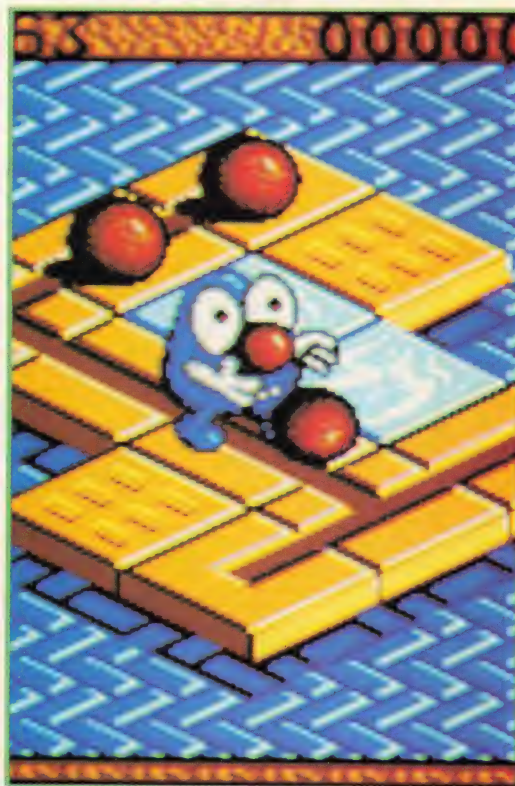
The game ends when you have lost your three lives. A useful feature for a

If you enjoy games such as that age-old classic, Zenji, and, more recently, Xor - then look no further, as Bombuzal is the game for you. It combines pretty graphics and unobtrusive sound, with some of the most mind-bendingly infuriating puzzles ever. Each level can only be completed by using a certain route, and the process of finding this route can be long and hard - but the feeling of satisfaction when you do, is unbelievable. If puzzle games are your thing, then give this a whirl. If they aren't - give it a go, anyway.

SM

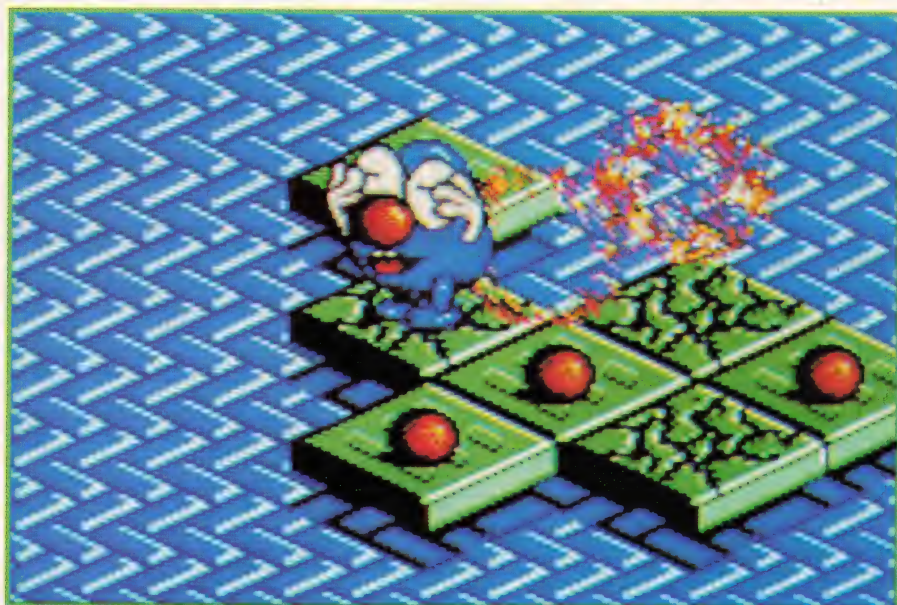
When some of the top programmers in the country collaborate on a project, you can be certain that the result will be something special. Bombuzal is a clever and thoughtful game, the controls are adequately responsive, the general presentation is bold, colourful and professional and the game-play will keep the most ardent and enthusiastic games player amused for hours - what more could you ask from a game?

JS



game as large as Bombuzal, is the 'continue play' option, which allows you to restart on the last level you died on with a fresh set of lives.

STA



Our rotund hero stands poised for one of the 120 levels' explosive finale.

STA
Rating

73%

GRAPHICS: 68%
SOUND: 53%

LASTING APPEAL: 76%
ADDICTIVENESS: 75%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 10277

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MOTORBIKE MADNESS

— MASTERTRONIC (£9.95) —

If, like me, you have watched BBC TV's 'Kickstart' program on a Sunday afternoon, and thought, "I could do that!" - now's your chance. Because Mastertronic have brought to you all of the thrills and spills of trials-bike riding without the risk, and, more impor-

tantly, without the droning tones of Peter Purves mocking your every mistake.

You begin your race, straddling the revving bike, and ready to go. The course is shown in isometric 3D, and dotted on the surface are the course's hazardous obstacles: greasy poles, decrepit old VW Beetles and various ramps. Points are gained by successfully negotiating these - and what do points make? Prizes! Yes, you've guessed it, if you complete the course within the time-limit AND without running out of fuel, you will, after being shown your placing in relation to the other unseen competitors, receive a money bonus. However, before you rush out and buy yourself a congratulatory, slap-up din-dins, the money

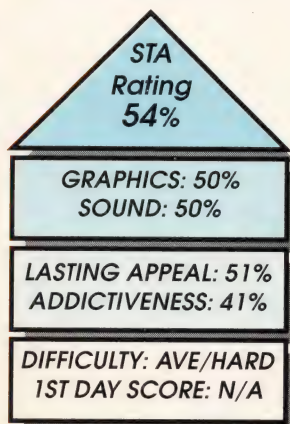


can be best spent on spares for your bike, which is damaged every time you collide with an obstacle. But, if you fall off too much, and the damage is too extreme, your bike will explode and your game will have come to an abrupt end.

Motorbike Madness casts a daring tyre into what is, currently, an empty market, and, unfortunately, gets scalded. Although it carries all the hallmarks that normally make Binary Design's games popular - attractive graphics and boppy tunes - the game itself doesn't have

enough variation to stay the distance. The courses, though initially very difficult, are all very similar. The controls are very, very responsive and this, combined with the game's dodgy sprite detection, makes Motorbike Madness appear, at first, to be totally unplayable. That said, it is not a bad game, it just doesn't excel in any quarter. Mastertronic will soon be releasing their sideways-on trials simulation, Kickstart II - hang around for that.

STA



AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS

— PANDORA (£19.95) —

Anyone familiar with the classic Jules Verne novel will know how Phileas Fogg undertook a bet to travel the world within 80 days. Well, Pandora have obviously read an abbreviated version, as Mr. Fogg only visits five countries.

After the player has endured an over-long load-up sequence, a map of the world appears. Beneath this map

you are shown the amount of money Fogg has (initially £20000), and four icons. These icons allow you to bribe the captain of the ship or the train driver, in order to reach your destination more quickly; play cards to win more dosh; pause; and, more importantly, begin the game.

On starting the game, a little dot travels the globe depicting your journey; its first destination, India. On arriving, Fogg gets lost in a dangerous jungle and must find his way out. His attempts are viewed from the side, as he runs along in a most ungentlemanly manner, lobbing spears at energy-sapping birds, natives and the obligatory end-of-level guardians. This level plays and looks very similar to Player's awful 'Street Fight', and is just as bad. Having reached the end relatively unscathed, Fogg continues his travels, this time to Japan, where our hero(!)

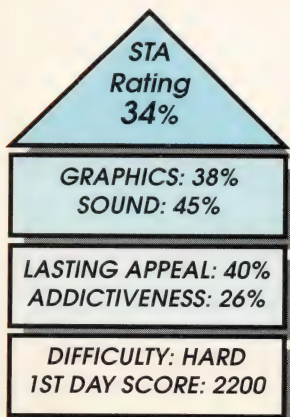


must form a human pyramid by catching four oriental chappies on his shoulders. They run from the right and bounce from a spring-board for you to catch. This level is very difficult, and it took me absolutely ages just to catch one guy. Having survived these two uninspiring levels, Fogg moves on to America, where he dodges badly-animated wolves and red Indians in an attempt to reach a wind sledge. If he manages this, or if you are still playing, he will reach the final part of his journey - England. Here you are mistaken for a burglar and

must escape the long arm of the law by climbing, leaping and running and throwing paving stones. Complete this section within eighty days and you will have completed your uninteresting task.

Eighty Days is totally uncharacteristic of Verne's novel, and captures none of the book's atmosphere with its dull and repetitive gameplay. With as much potential as the story has, it's a pity Pandora wasted it on a five-stage platform game. In fact, whilst playing this, I could have sworn I heard poor old Jules turning in his grave.

STA



NEW

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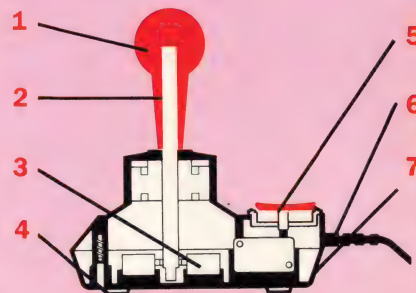
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Original it is not - Action-packed it most certainly is! I'm surprised that Crowther and Bishop decided on the unoriginal Commando-combat theme, but the result is explosive. The mayhem starts from the moment you enter the headquarters, and never ceases. The jeep at the beginning of the game is a welcome alternative to the human tank, who usually storms through level after level of opposition. But is Fernandez original enough to justify itself as an inclusion to the long list? Well, it doesn't! Ploughing through the enemy in a jeep is all jolly good fun and the building search facility is unique. But if you have played Commando, Rambo etc, Fernandez has little more to offer.

JS

Set in an unnamed banana republic, Fernandez Must Die has the player controlling a lone warrior as he yomps up a vertically scrolling, Ikari Warriors-style screen. Armed with nine lives and a limited supply of bullets and emplacement-destroying rockets, our hero, Harman, has been sent to rescue the P.O.Ws and wipe out the republic's evil dictator - the Fernandez of the title - and his eight members of the Junta.

You begin your mission within the security of a jeep, safe from any enemy bullets. However, if you think you can simply plough through the attacking hordes by just driving over them, think again. Although obviously safer than walking, the jeep can only take a certain number of hits before it bursts into flames. The state of the jeep's health is shown - surprise, surprise - by a jeep icon above the playing area, and with every bullet that hits you, a part of this icon disappears. When there is only half of this icon left, it is time to evacuate the jeep, because it could go up in flames at any time.

As you fight your way up-screen, leaving a trail of devastation in your wake, you will encounter numerous locked buildings, and to enter them you must first blow the door off its hinges. By walking up to

"Imagework's third release involves fighting your way through a mad general's army. Does it offer anything new to what is an already crowded genre?"

FERNANDEZ MUST DIE

IMAGEWORKS (£19.95)



Take on the military might of an imaginary banana republic, as you attempt to overthrow the Junta - single handedly!

Apart from the tasteless title, I can find very little in Fernandez to recommend. Basically, it is just another in the never-ending line of Ikari Warriors and Leatherneck clones. Although the scrolling is smooth, the graphics are very small and undetailed, and sound is limited to a few unimpressive samples. The idea of blowing open doors to steal supplies and free prisoners is quite novel, but not utilized to the full. Not the worst of the genre, but far, far from the best.

SM

the door, an explosive charge will automatically be laid. Once planted, you must move out of the explosive's vicinity or you will be killed in the resulting blast. Once the door is blown, whoever was in there will stagger out. This depends on what type of building you have broken into. For instance, if you blow open a cell, obviously P.O.Ws are going to escape - normally in the opposite direction to the melee you are causing! The most important buildings to break into are the hospitals, as these house the hiding members of the Junta. These portly leaders are instantly recognizable by their spiffing full-military regalia, and must be shot as soon as they appear, or they will escape. But if you do manage to shoot the cowardly so-and-so you will receive a large bonus and an extra life. You will also receive an extra life for every ten P.O.Ws freed.

The game ends when you have located and eliminated Fernandez, or when you have lost all of your lives. These are

lost by being on the wrong end of one of the enemy's massive bullets, or by being squashed by a tank or train. And, when you are hit, Harman's blood-spattered body will fall to the ground with a sampled yell, only to be reincarnated, temporarily immune to fire, several seconds later.

STA



STA
Rating

63%

GRAPHICS: 57%
SOUND: 45%

LASTING APPEAL: 63%
ADDICTIVENESS: 66%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: 10200

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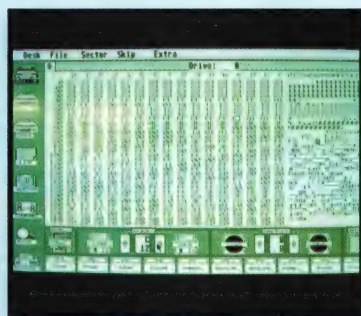


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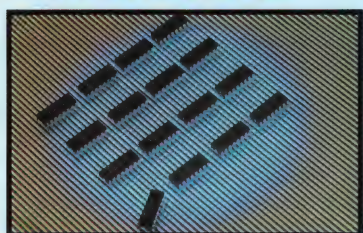


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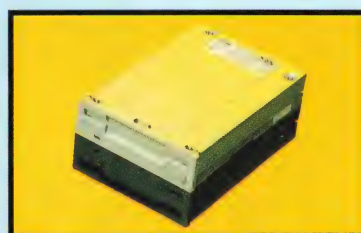
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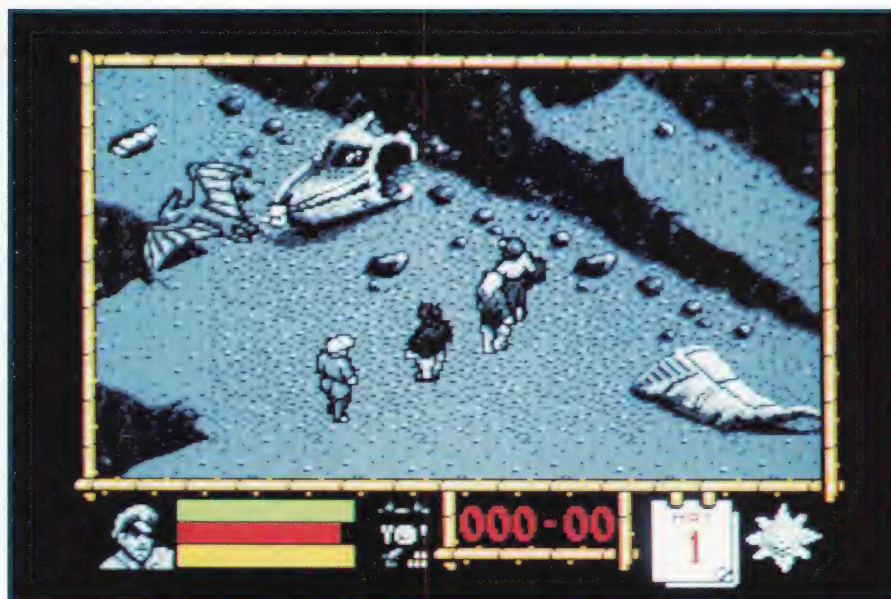
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Having just crawled out of their plane's wreckage, our party prepare to search Denton Design's sprawling arcade / adventure.



Where Time Stood Still captures all of the atmosphere of those dated Doug McClure films; in fact, the only thing missing is the man's legs kicking as he is being eaten!

The black and white graphics are very effective, and the characters, though small, are quite well-animated. Graphically, there are some nice touches too, with tentacles reaching from the swamp and the day changing to night. Sound is good with a nice haunting tune playing throughout, but if you get bored of the music there are some interesting sound effects.

Where Time Stood Still is impressive, and although there are dozens of these 3D arcade-adventures around, this is the pick of the bunch.

SM

"If you have ever seen those Doug McClure films on a Saturday morning and have wanted to beat up rubber dinosaurs whilst wiping the sweat out of your heroic blues eyes, you need wait no longer! Ocean and Denton Designs have brought to you the sequel Doug was too old to make."

WHERE TIME STOOD STILL

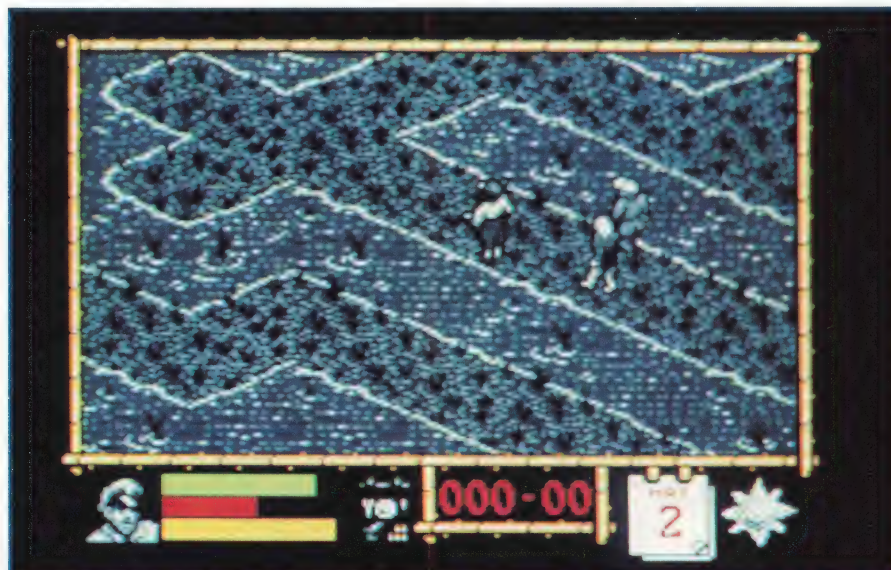
OCEAN (£19.95)

May 1st: I cannot remember what happened. It was all too fast. I seem to remember hitting some air turbulence over the Tibetan mountains, but after that, nothing. By some miracle, my passengers, Miss Gloria, her fiancé Dirk, and her father, Clive, are all safe. The force of the impact has torn the plane apart, and the pieces are strewn all over this strange, barren wilderness. We are all frightened, and night is approaching. Who knows what lurks in this inhospitable land?

May 2nd: We are awoken from our uneasy sleep by the cries of the strange, reptilian birds circling above. They are like nothing I have seen before. Dirk remarks on their similarity to some kind of dinosaur; how ridiculous! The area is punctuated by huge plateaus, and seems to be surrounded by a bubbling marsh. Food is already getting low thanks to Clive's voracious appetite, so tomorrow we must travel across the bubbling swamp.

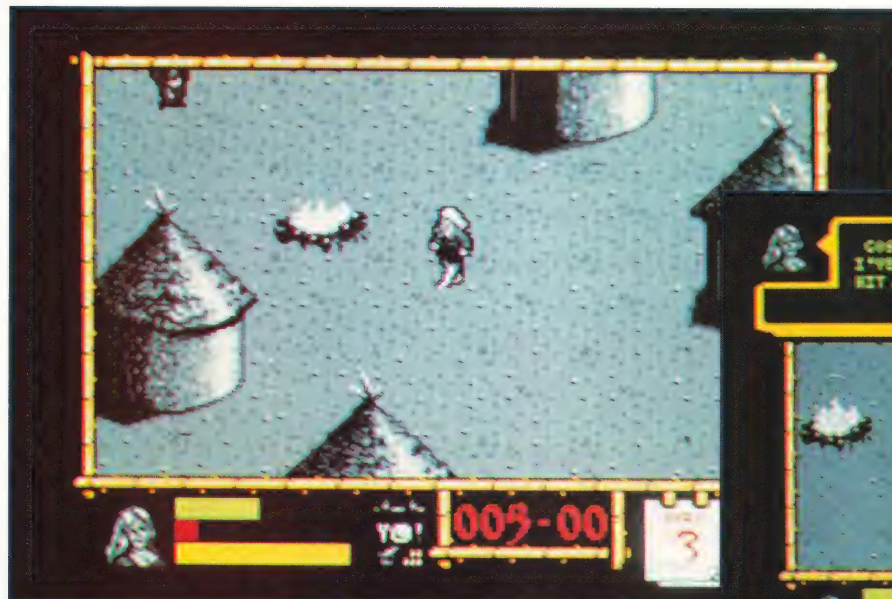
Ocean's "Where time stood still", mimics perfectly the old B-movies which star those abysmally animated rubber monsters. The storyline adheres closely to one of which H.G.Wells would have been proud. The gameplay area must be massive - I continually found new territories to explore. The interaction between the ill-fated characters is well implemented, although fat Clive often obstructed my movements. Both the graphics and sound effects complement the game and although the game does have one or two minor glitches, I would still recommend it.

NC



No time to stop and think when you are traversing the swamp. If you stay in the same place too long you begin to sink!

May 3rd: Clive is dead. To reach the marshes we had to cross a rope bridge. Clive had insisted on going first and, pushing past Dirk, he started crossing. He had got half way when the wooden floor started creaking. He panicked and tried to run, but the wood gave way, and he disappeared through the hole. Somehow, he managed to hold on, so I ran with a rope to try to pull him out, but it was too late. His fingers slipped, and he fell. His scream never seemed to end...



Gloria, alone and prone to danger, enters a seemingly empty village. But no sooner has she started exploring, than she is set upon by head-hunting cannibals.



May 5th: This strange world holds no surprises for us now. We expect the unexpected, and simply accept it when it happens. Gloria is still shocked after Dirk's disappearance, but she still insists we keep going. We are camped on the other side of the swamp; but with no food or water, I do not think we can go on for much longer. I have spotted a village on the horizon, and when we are rested we will ask the villagers for help. Perhaps they know of a route out of this hell-hole!

Based loosely upon the old 'The Land That Time Forgot' and 'Journey to the Earth's Core' films, Where Time Stood Still charts the travels of four plane crash survivors as they explore a mysterious land. They each have their own particular characteristics and skills, and by swapping between each person, optimum use of these must be made.

The game begins shortly after your party has crawled from the wreckage of what used to be your plane. You initially control the pilot of the plane, Jarret; a hero who is in the Doug McClure vein - but if you so wish, you can control any one of the other three. Once you have decided who will lead the others, you are ready to explore the strange environment. Your character can walk or run in any direction, and wherever he or she goes, the others

will follow sheep-like. And naturally, in an area as hostile as this you will have to be armed, so each character carries a hand gun and six bullets.

Your travels are depicted in B movie style, monochromatic graphics, and as you move, the 3D playing area scrolls, keeping the leading character central. Below the playing area is a status screen, and this shows the health of the character being used, the date, your score, and whether it is night or day - which is a bit silly, as the screen changes colour to indicate it is night time! Moving away from the plane, you will find various useful objects, such as food, knives and first-aid kits. Each character can hold four items, and these objects, obviously left over from the plane crash, should be collected

and utilised whenever necessary, using the game's easy-to-use menu/icon system.

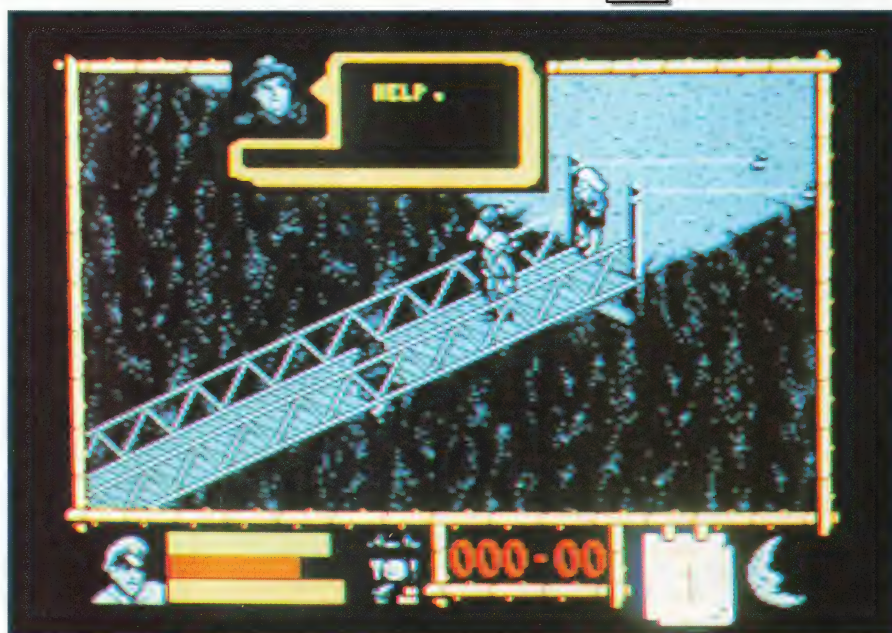
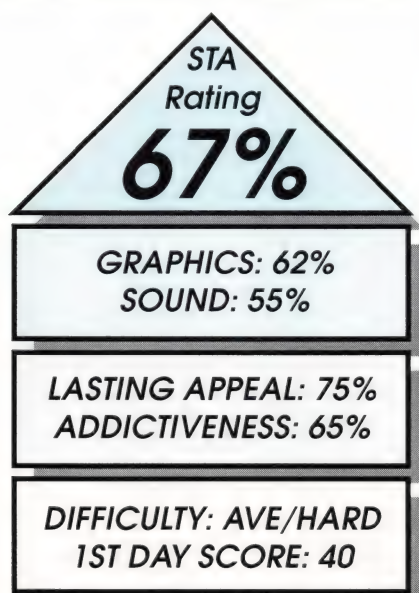
As this is B-movie-style country, dinosaurs roam the land. None of your rubber beasts here, though; a huge Tyrannosaurus Rex chases your party killing whoever he touches and a Pterodactyl swoops from the sky snatching any unwary straggler.

Additionally, as if you didn't have enough to cope with, there are stereotypical natives who are best avoided. The game ends when all the characters have been killed, but should you survive the swamps, the dinosaurs and the various mishaps which may befall your party, you may just be lucky enough to eventually find a

I think Ocean set out with all good intentions to present one of those exciting, larger-than-life dinosaur adventures which, for years, kept Saturday morning movie goers on the edge of their seats. Careful attention has been paid to the stock characterization - the butch hero, the beautiful heroine, the professor and the fat idiot, - and the landscape, too, is suitably barren and sparten. But I can't say I enjoyed the game particularly! Like the acting in those old films, the action is very wooden, and even with the odd, obliging Pterodactyl flying on screen, Where Time Stood Still didn't exactly make time fly and so I can't have been enjoying myself.

JS

route home. **STA**



Military training is designed to turn flabby, naive teenagers into tough fighting men. This is achieved with merciless exercise which is designed to cause extreme exhaustion and break the spirit. There is no sympathy for those who can't hack it!

ACTION SERVICE

COBRASOFT (£19.95)

Ever on the lookout for original ideas in software, Infogrames present a commando training simulation called Action Service. Infogrames describe the game as: 'A unique game containing all the features that add up to one of the most challenging and exciting programs ever.' Unique it most certainly is - but exciting and challenging? In theory, this original game is an ingenious idea with some attractive features, including a video recording system with playback and slow motion for analysis. Additionally, there are five different modes of training assault course, with construction kit, physical risk, exercise and close combat. Add to this, speech synthesis and twelve-player participation and you would have thought Infogrames were on to a winner with Action Service. Sadly, this is not the case!

Your task is to prepare a group of soldiers for the 'Cobra Command', but first you must decipher the confusing controls and the detailed, but not very clear, accompanying manual. Even simply

selecting an exercise is unnecessarily complicated, but the screen eventually

Infogrames attempts to bring us original concepts in software have had mixed results, ranging from the brilliant Stir Crazy and Hostages to the crummy Lee Enfield series of games and, now, Action Service. As a software reviewer there is nothing more irritating than over-complicated instructions and uncontrollable game-play - unhappily, Action Service, is marred by both.

JS

shows what vaguely resembles an assault course. The screen is made up of a number of windows which show various stages of the course and a picture of your drill sergeant who shouts the occasional word of encouragement. The joystick controls are appalling as you try in vain to negotiate the assault course. Holding the joystick to the right

should make the soldier run, but there appears to be some break in communication between the joystick and the program, as the soldier stops, starts, ducks and pretends to throw a grenade. The manual describes how pressing the firebutton and simultaneously pushing the joystick to the right, moves the soldier over low obstacles. However, I must report that my soldier disobeyed my joystick commands so often that he deserved to be court-martialled.

After the disappointing results on the assault course, the invitation to really test my troops with a customized course

As gruelling tests go, this is one of the hardest. Not because of the difficulty of the obstacles or the number of opposition mind; because of the hideous control system. It's all very well having an 'intelligent' character who can react to any situation, but having this character too clever, with a different set of moves for each action, is just plain daft - especially when you are trying to inflict a karate death-blow on an approaching soldier, and you end up crawling past him. Even if it didn't have its awful control method, Action Service would still be a poor game. Although graphically and sonically it is of a high calibre, the missions are tedious and over-long, and soon become repetitive.

SM



failed to impress me. The construction mode is selected by clicking on 'Edit' and, supposedly, you can use the various functions with the minimum of fuss. Unfortunately, the construction mode is also complicated. The screen is reputed to consist of 256 views and 4 planes of perspective, and you can alter the background, foreground, superfluous decoration and place hazards and traps.

STA



There appears to be a lack of communication between the joystick and the commando, as he runs into walls and falls over obstacles.

STA
Rating

53%

GRAPHICS: 49%
SOUND: 55%

LASTING APPEAL: 56%
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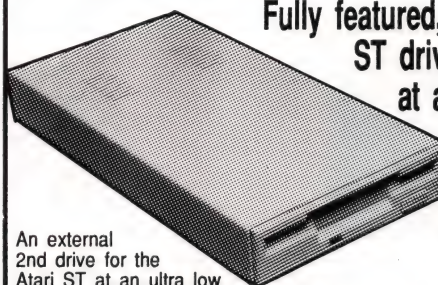
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Welcome to the second part of the competition to win a Gauntlet II arcade machine. After answering the three questions from last month and saving the competition entry token, you now have a further three questions to answer this month. To promote their next major arcade conversion, ThunderBlade, U.S. Gold have teamed up with ST Action to bring you this magnificent prize. We are giving you the chance to win your very own Gauntlet II arcade machine, worth in the region of £3000-£4000!

There will be 20 runners-up prizes of a Thunder Blade T-Shirt and game as well.

All you have to do is to correctly answer the three questions set each month in last month's, this month's and January issues of ST Action and fill in the answer form in the January '89 issue. Along with the answer form, you need to have cut out and saved the U.S. Gold Arcade competition coupons from the bottom of the competition page, three in total. No photocopies will be accepted, but you can enter as many times as you like as long as each entry comes complete with three coupons and the official entry form.

THE QUESTIONS PART TWO

- 1 - What is the latest mountain climbing release from Epyx?
- 2 - What soft drinks company has tied up with U.S. Gold to offer the Mad Mix Challenge?
 - a) Pepsi
 - b) Coca Cola
 - c) Lucozade
- 3 - Name any three of the four characters in Gauntlet II

Now you've got the answers to the first two parts of the competition, guard them with your life until next month and don't forget to cut out the coupon at the bottom of the page and save that as well.

Wave after wave of repetitive Japs make up the main part of this disappointing conversion.



Over the past year, Capcom have produced accurate conversions of lesser known arcade games, such as Bionic Commando and Sidearms. Therefore, the rather obscure 1943 was not an obvious choice. Unfortunately, I feel the reason that 1943 didn't exactly set the arcades alight, was because it is old-hat, and Capcom's full price conversion only serves to emphasize this. I would have thought that the idea of little planes buzzing around the sky would have gone out with arcade consoles and cartridges. Quite frankly, the appeal of this game is so short term and the theme so stale and hackneyed that I cannot not recommend it - especially priced at twenty quid!

JS

Of all the Capcom/U.S Gold games to appear recently, only Bionic Commando has been above average. They all seem to have graphics which are extremely close to those of the coin-ops, but gameplay which isn't half as good. 1943 had an even harder task ahead of it, as the actual machine itself wasn't a lot of cop - something that shows in this lacklustre conversion. Probe have got the graphics and sound fairly accurate, but the most annoying point is the extremely intrusive multi-load; was there really a need for a load between every level? A polished but below-average shoot'em-up, not really deserving of consideration.

SM

1943

CAPCOM (£19.95)

"Elite's conversion of 1942 hit the shores of 8-bit owners about two years ago, only to be shot down without a trace. Will the unimaginatively named sequel suffer the same fate?"

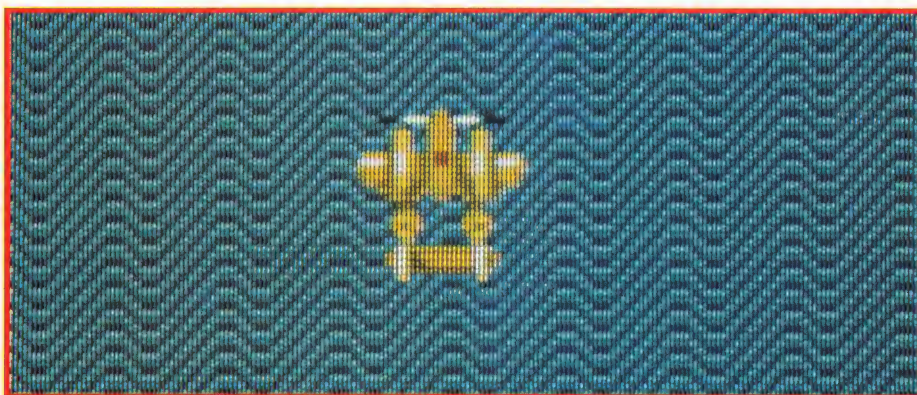
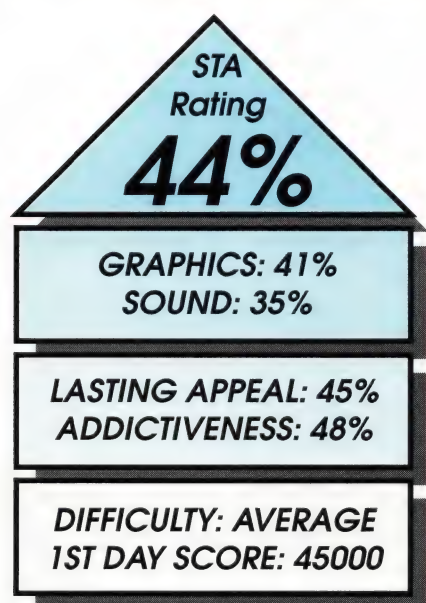
Set, rather obviously, in 1943, you are an American pilot (probably called Lou, Bud or some other stereotypical name from a silly little American mini-series) and you're fighting in the famous Battle of Midway. Yes, you've guessed it! Behind the thinner-than-air plot, it's another vertically-scrolling shoot'em-up, this time involving the destruction of the Japanese battleship, Yamato.

You begin this aerial assault loop-the-loop in your twin-engined, P38 Lightning. No sooner are you in the air than the enemy appear. Like you, these

blighters are flying in dual-engined planes, and although they only have one gun compared to your two, they appear in groups of four and five. You begin your brave fight equipped with three lives, each of which is lost when all of your energy bar is depleted, and this energy is lost if you are hit by a bullet you collide with another plane. If you are heading for a collision, you can roll the plane, make it loop-the-loop and thus avoid losing any energy.

The mission itself is split into several sections, each loaded separately, and involves you battling your way through the swarms of different planes until you reach the larger, end-of-level mega-opponent at the end. If you fail to destroy this colossus within a certain time, your mission will be deemed a failure, and your game will end. However, should you destroy it, you will be awarded a bonus and you will enter the next level. This

would be extremely hard if you only had the pathetic guns you begin with, but luckily, floating down-screen with the planes are flashing POW symbols. Shooting these will change them into a useful enhancement, such as, three-way fire, laser bolts and three-way lasers. Additionally, if you simply leave them as POWs and collect them, your energy will be topped up slightly. Though much before its time, your plane is armed with a smart bomb which, when activated, destroys most of the screen's inhabitants.



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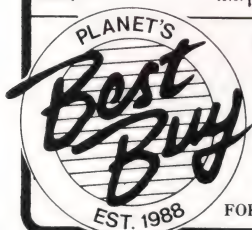
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STA

Rating

78%

TEXT/GRAPHICS: 80%

GAMEPLAY: 65%

LASTING APPEAL: 82%

ADDICTIVENESS: 71%

Your last assignment was sheer hell and let's face it - you blew it! As a Bubble 'O' Seven agent you deserve a rest, and what could be more relaxing than warping your mind into the body of a goldfish, and spending a month drifting in a bowl of pondweed? Of course you knew it wouldn't last. No sooner did you master the art of swimming upside-down through the windows of your plastic castle than it decided to give you a small task to prove that your mind is still razor-sharp.

If you can solve three simple missions you will then be sent to Hydropolis, realm of the fish people, to save their world from sabotage. Thanks to the electronic gimmicks

"Just when you thought it was safe to go back into the water - FISH has arrived with a splash. Our new hero is a goldfish and he is undoubtedly very colourful, but will he Flip or will he Flop?"

FISH

MAGNETIC SCROLLS (£24.95)

I like the games from Scrolls - the trouble is they usually baffle me. That's why I'm surprised to say that I appear to be cracking this one. I have always loved the thrill of adventures, but only for as long as I am winning! From what I have seen, I would say that this is possibly one of their easiest games, and in my book that's not a bad thing. I think Fish has gone a long way to bringing back the fun to adventures which is something we see too little of.

AM

supplied by the department's back-room boys, you are able to leave your own body and 'warp' through time and space to take over the control of some unsuspecting human's mind. As

the top agent from the Department of Inter-Dimensional Espionage you have been put through a training course designed to turn your mind into a computer and your body into a killing machine. What a pity you appear to have slept through all the lessons!

Lurking out there at the end of the warp factors wait your deadliest enemies - The Seven Deadly Fins. They are the most dangerous group of inter-dimensional anarchists around. They live up to their name in every respect. There are seven of them, they are deadly and they have been seen with fins.

After producing a string of traditional adventures, Magnetic Scrolls appear to be branching out into many new fields (and ponds) with their latest games. 'Fish' has been written to

prove that adventures can be fun. The game is full of jokes concerning fish and most of them take the pisces out of you!

From your goldfish bowl you may select one of three warp entrances to move into. There is a small warp, a jagged warp and a smooth warp. The first zone is set in a modern-day recording studio and the body which you inhabit appears to be that of the poor slob who makes the coffee! In between brewing cups of java for the irascible studio manager, you are able to scout through the back rooms and rummage through the out-takes.





Anyone fancy a copy of 'The Gills are alive with the Sound of Music'? The second zone seems to be back in time, as the other inhabitants are weird hippies in flared jeans who hang around old ruined abbeys giving free rock shows and taking part in some kind of religious ritual. The final zone appears to place you in a weather forecaster's nightmare, as each location has names such as 'Sunny Intervals' or 'Squally Shower Forest'.

In each of the warp zones you may find and manipulate objects as usual, but you can't take the objects back through the warp lines.

As is usually the case in the Scrolls games, the accompanying graphics are of a very high quality and they add that seal of excellence to the game that you would expect. The text is all very jolly and the game's responses to your fumbling commands are equally jokey. It is a game which dispenses with the idea that an adventure must have a thousand locations describing misty moors in order to give the player value for money. Or that there must be acres of descriptive text to prove how clever the compression routine is - 'Never mind the quality feel, the width!' Fish is also Scrolls' answer to the criticism that their games are too difficult. The puzzles have been designed to be inge-

I like this adventure game. It combines an interesting story with humour. I really do enjoy adventure games that are humorous, it makes the times that I get stuck almost bearable. From playing the game and reading the accompanying documentation, it is obvious that a lot of work has gone into Fish. The pictures and text are both of a high quality and I found the storyline a little bit different from the norm. The only query I have is that with all of the references to fishes, is the glass case really a Red Herring? I think Fish is well worth a play.

SK

nious, but not as mind-bendingly wicked as in the past.

All the usual options are available including the ability to select large-sized text to make life easier for TV monitor users.

The game comes with a large amount of documentation, all of which is very funny and, unlike all previous novellas and blurbs which fill up the big boxes (with the exception of Knight Orc), this one is worth having. The information includes all known data on the characters making up the Seven Deadly Fins. For example, there is

Chainsaw Tracker.

Tracker has only one arm. This was the result of an accident involving his favourite pastime, Chainsaw Juggling. While he was practising, someone asked him the way to the toilet and he pointed the way! Five people were killed in the ensuing mayhem. I wonder if these descriptions bear any resemblance to the pack of maniacs who actually make up the Magnetic Scrolls team?

Well children, what are you waiting for? Shall we look through the jagged warp or the smooth warp today? Either way, there are some very funny people waiting for you at the end of these rainbows.

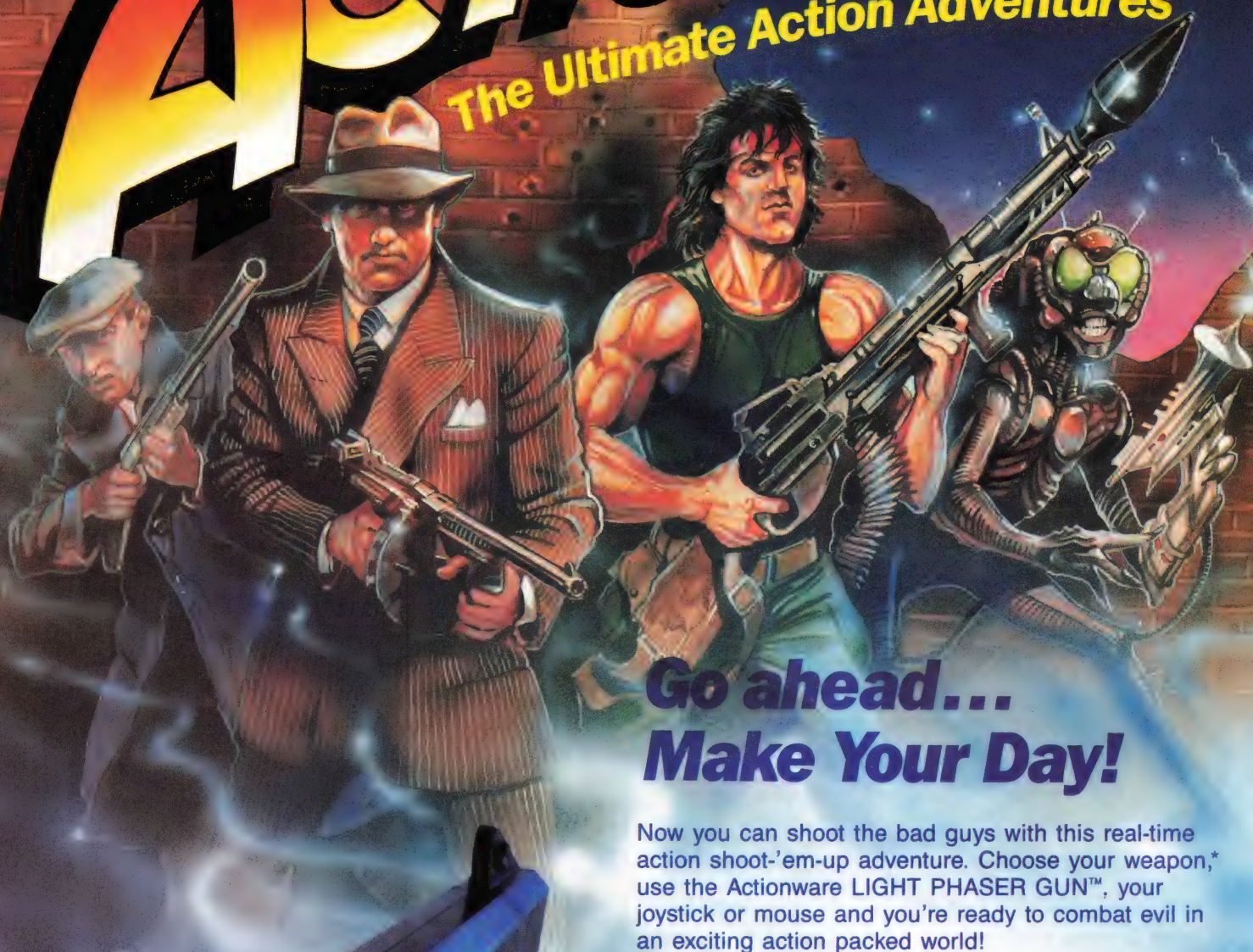
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* Atari ST (Mouse only). AMIGA (Phaser Gun or Mouse). IBM PC and Compatibles (Phaser Gun, Mouse, or Joystick). Commodore C64 128 and Apple IIGS Versions coming soon.

Luxor is perhaps the most entertaining of the three releases from Software Horizons. But this success is not due to originality and ingenuity, as Luxor is derived from that ancient eight-bit classic, Dropzone. A spaceship, resembling a twenty-four blade Swiss Army knife, lands with a scream of rocket engines, deposits one man equipped with a jetpack and exits in a similar dramatic style. The joystick affords moderately responsive control over our Jetman and the fire button

LUXOR

SOFTWARE HORIZONS (£14.95)

activates the weaponry in the direction that he is facing.

There are three planets to conquer, the first showing a barren moon-scape with a myriad of alien canon fodder to eliminate. I fail to see the link between robots and gargoyle-like faces, but they both chase Jetman around the planet in great numbers, and fire lasers with some intelligence. Whilst wiping out the alien community with rapid laser blasts and avoiding their retaliatory fire, it is important to replenish fuel levels at every opportunity by absorbing the occasional letter 'B', which conveniently glides over the planet. Also, your weaponry can be beefed-

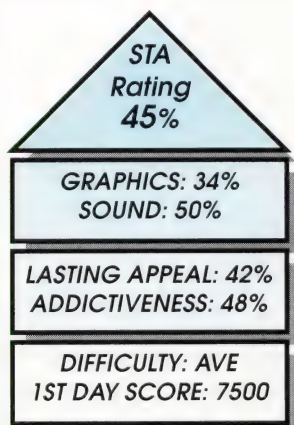
up and customised by absorbing the letter 'P'.

The only differences on the other three planets are superficial background changes; the game-play is much the same. Finally, once you have conquered all three planets, Paradox presents you with your just

reward in the shape of a screen-shot of a voluptuous and scantily clad lady - tantalizing eh?

As described, Luxor resembles the classic Dropzone, with elements of a few other arcade games from days gone by. Luxor is the most respectable game to be released by Software Horizons, although we would still like to see standards improve.

STA



WIZARD WARZ

GO (£19.95)

As the ST world re-emerges from the dark bowels of the Dungeon Master game, the race is now on to find a worthy successor.

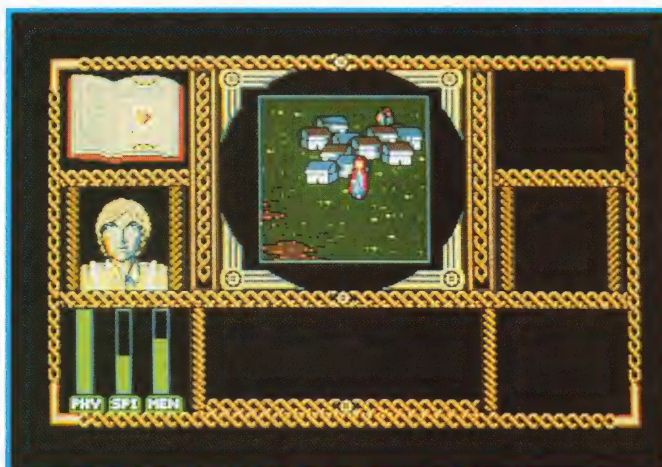
Once again, the wise old wizard has died and left you with the task of sorting out the mess he has left behind. Your first task is to fight and defeat the six local monsters and return the six magical items they possess to the nearby cities. Each city will reward you for the return of its trophy with sufficient food to enable you to regain enough strength to tackle the next bad guy.

Beginning as a novice, you are permitted to select only four magical spells from the wizard's book to help you in your battles. Should you successfully win through the first level of the game, you will be faced with two more

levels containing 45 different forms of magic adversaries. With each successful battle completed, your abilities will increase until you are able to find and use all of the 26 spells to be found in the game.

The screen display is taken up with a portrait of your own pretty face, your spell book, a picture of any nearby monster and an inventory of your possessions. The action screen must be the smallest screen I have ever seen. Your small scuttling figure is shown within this area, wandering around the countryside searching for the cities and guardian monsters. As you approach a monster, his face will be shown on your early-warning screen which will enable you to turn and flee.

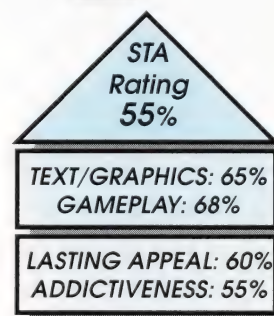
If you decide to march



forward to encounter the beast and try out your magic in battle, the screen will change to a small cross-hatched square which depicts the combat arena. Using the mouse, you must try to manoeuvre your figure so as to face your opponent who is dashing wildly around. Should you find that your opponent always manages to deliver his own well-placed zap spell, you will then discover one of the game's most annoying features. Each time you die the game must be re-booted from the desktop!

This is an awkward game to master and, at times, you may well wonder whether the effort is worthwhile.

STA



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CASE FOR CONVERSION

P.O.W. (Prisoners Of War)

The latest Renegade rip-off head butts and kicks its way into the arcades in the form of 'P.O.W.', one of the more violent video games. Fighting against all odds (which isn't unusual), the hero must break out of the

onslaught of enemy soldiers without mercy. The soldiers are armed to the teeth with knives, guns and grenades, and defeating them certainly ain't no picnic! However, it's possible to disarm some of the soldiers and use their knives and guns against them. The smug look on the player's face when he blows

comrades. Mistimed grenades also kill off anyone near the explosion - but most are aimed at you, so don't expect too much help!

In 'P.O.W.', it's not just a matter of seeing off soldiers advancing in hordes towards you - they come from all angles in this game! At regular points during the game, you'll find yourself ambushed by Green Berets leaping from tanks and helicopters, or martial arts experts rushing up from behind, all eager to spill your blood! You have to defeat all such enemies before you can continue in your fight for freedom, so saving machine guns until you really need them is recommended.

Further on in the game, you will have to deal with kamikaze motorcyclists, and you'll even have to fight to the death on a speeding elevator. Memories of 'Vigilante' instantly came to mind, and we were a little disappointed that no new ideas had been introduced.

New ideas, though don't always make a playable game, and we can't moan about the fun derived from 'P.O.W.'. The realistic poses of the characters when they attack or are hit, adds to the enjoyment, as does the scenario and the intermission screens. Sure, it's only 'Renegade' in uniform, but it's one of the better clones, and highly playable, although not as impossible as SNK



enemy war camp and find a route to freedom. Another impossible mission?

Playing against intricate backgrounds of huts and skylines, and with a thumping sound track, you have to fight off the

away half a troop with their own guns, says it all!

A realistic element not found in many other games, but included in 'P.O.W.', is the fact that the enemies are effected by stray bullets shot by their



would have you believe!

Looking back, this is one of the best beat'em-ups for some time, the last half-decent fight being in 'Vigilante'. Regardless of the fact that 'P.O.W.' takes a lot from other games, as well as a few action shots from 'Predator', it would still be worthwhile, and feasible, to convert the game to the ST. The high-quality sound and graphics, and bloodsoaked action, would convert reasonably well at worst, and the controls would have to be slightly altered, but you would still end up with one hell of a playable game!

Cabal

Before playing Cabal, I decided to look through the operating manual to see what the game was all





about. Well, I nearly died laughing when I saw the scenario. I mean, a two-sentence introduction, ending with 'Your mission is to destroy their (the terrorists) dream of world domination' is hardly what could be described as innovative writing, is it? I was left wondering what Electrocoin were up to, and if it was even worth turning our arcade on!

Thankfully, my idea of some kind of Space Invaders revamp wasn't quite right. Instead, Cabal is in the Operation Wolf mould, except that this version uses a trackball and on-screen target, and it doesn't scroll. The theme's similar, though, with the main objective simply being to wipe out all of the enemies on each screen.

The type of assaults that you can expect include, grenade-lobbing soldiers, somersaulting commandos, low-fly-ing jets and hovering helicopters. After every four screens, you

have to defeat one of the enemies' secret weapons, the first one being a double-rotor-bladed chopper which bombards you with hundreds of missiles.

You view the game from behind your frantic mercenary, with the trackball controlling both him and the target. You can destroy just about everything on the screen, including buildings and gates, either with your normal gun or with grenades which are collected by shooting certain soldiers. Other weapons include a heavy

rifle and machine gun.

Cabal is far from being a serious game, as the slapstick skull on the title screen proves. The tune, and the way that your character celebrates when you finish each screen, also leaves a lot to be desired!

As you progress further into the game, you'll start facing frogmen and submarines which bob

up and down in the water making them difficult to hit. There are also more soldiers to destroy on the higher levels.

The small, pastel-like graphics are in a similar vein to the ST version of 'Oids', and are superbly executed, so that it's possible to tell the distance that each soldier is from you, and aim accordingly.

However, a licence of Cabal would probably be eclipsed by that of Operation Wolf, no matter how enjoyable the arcade version was. Expect a few clones, though.



Wec Le Mans

As hydraulic driving simulators go, Wec Le Mans is one of the best, and probably the granddaddy of them all. Unlike its main rival, Out Run, Wec Le Mans concentrates on being a realistic and authentic simulation of the famous French race, and succeeds in style.

Obviously, the main aim is to survive the gruelling 24-hour race, reaching each checkpoint within the time limit. Treacherous bends in the road and lurching hills hinder your progress and can cause spectacular crashes if they aren't approached accurately.

Other cars are also racing against the clock, as well as each other, so don't





excellent visual and sound effects, lies with the programming techniques used to give the 'feel' of speed. When you play the game, you'll find that you get very involved, squirming at near misses, and

experiencing the climbing of the hills. The hydraulics on the car increase the exhilaration produced by each game, but even the stand-up version with no cabinet extras is almost as good.

Both Elite and U.S. Gold have already written racing games on the ST with a fair amount of success, each one including a

STA

expect them to give way without a fight! Once you have overtaken them, you're going to have to maintain a fair amount of speed so that they won't come back and pass you.

Obstacles on the road are not your only problem, though. Off-road terrain, such as rocks and trees, can prove lethal if you attempt to corner too fast. It's also possible to be ditched into the side by the other cars, resulting in a frustrating crash and a loss of precious time.

The beauty of Wec Le Mans, apart from the



ACTION SURVEY

In order to establish exactly what you, the reader, would like to see in ST Action magazine, we have compiled a quick questionnaire which, if necessary, will enable us to fine-tune the content and format of the magazine thus making it even better than

before. Just to make it a little more worth-while, we're offering a year's free subscription to ST World or ST Action, to the first 50, yes 50, addresses pulled out of the hat on 10th of December. If you already subscribe to your chosen magazine, then we'll simply extend your subscription for you.

Complete the questions by simply ticking the relevant boxes or writing a quick note where applicable. This information will be treated in the strictest confidence. We only require names and addresses in order to administer prize-winning entries. Winners will be notified by post, two weeks after the closing date.

The address to send this page (or a photocopy of it) is shown at the bottom of the page. Thankyou for your help.

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2. Which model of ST do you own/use?

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15. Please write down any other comments or suggestions you would like to make:

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Win a Who Dares Wins weekend!



Infogrames are promoting both their combat games, Action Service and Hostages, by offering a fantastic weekend for two lucky winners. They will each win a Who Dares Wins weekend, run by three ex-SAS members in a private estate in Herefordshire. Arriving the evening before and spending the night in a nearby hotel, they will both be kitted out in combat uniform, issued with weapons (of the paint gun variety) and airlifted to the estate by helicopter. There the fun begins and, with pyrotechnics to avoid, the tasks set become a bit more than 'a walk in the park'! A six-course banquet follows in the evening and a video of the day's events will be shown.

Back to the hotel for a good night's rest!

As well as this fantastic prize, there are TEN runners-up prizes of either a Hostages or Action Service game. All you have to do is correctly answer the questions below and send in your entry by 13 December 1988.

Questions:

- 1) Which TV game-show contains an assault course section?
- 2) What do the letters SAS stand for?
- 3) What is the SAS's motto.





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The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into regarding competitions or the results of competitions. All prizes are offered believing them to be available. If, however, a prize is unavailable we reserve the right to substitute a prize of comparable value. No cash alternatives will be given. Results will be published as soon as possible and prizes despatched as quickly as possible. Please refrain from phoning regarding competition results or prize delivery. Employees of Gollner Publishing Ltd and companies participating in competitions are not eligible to enter.

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Dungeons and Disk Drives

Hi there! Stuck up a gum tree? Surrounded by dragons? Don't despair, write to the Dungeon and let them help. YOU may not know the answer - 'But now you know a Troll who does!'

Welcome to the ST Action Dungeon. Allow me to introduce myself - Mitch is the name and adventuring is my game. As the resident wizard, it is my task to keep order among the Dungeon crew and make sure that we keep you informed with all the latest news and views in the ST adventure scene. You can be sure of one thing, if the Dungeon Team doesn't know about it - it isn't worth knowing about! Readers of our sister magazine (ST World) will have already met us, as we have spent the last year-and-a-half in their basement keeping everyone in touch with all the latest adventures. However, as we appear to have been making too much noise downstairs, and disturbing the serious work which was going on up above, it was decided to banish us along with the rest of the Zap - Pow brigade!

Let me introduce the other members of the team. Firstly there is the Dragon. Dragon is a nine-foot-tall, friendly individual who has been my faithful friend for the last five years and he is perhaps best described as the gentle giant of the Dungeon. He was raised from an egg which I found in a dark corner of the Colossal Cave, and since that day he has travelled with me through many worlds of mystery and adventure. Although he is slow to anger, orcs and witches tend to give him a wide berth, as once he is roused his rage is fearful to behold. Surrounding the Dungeon is the moat which may only be crossed via a small wooden bridge. Beneath this bridge lives the other member of the team - the Troll! Whilst he is a good friend to the Dragon and myself, that is where

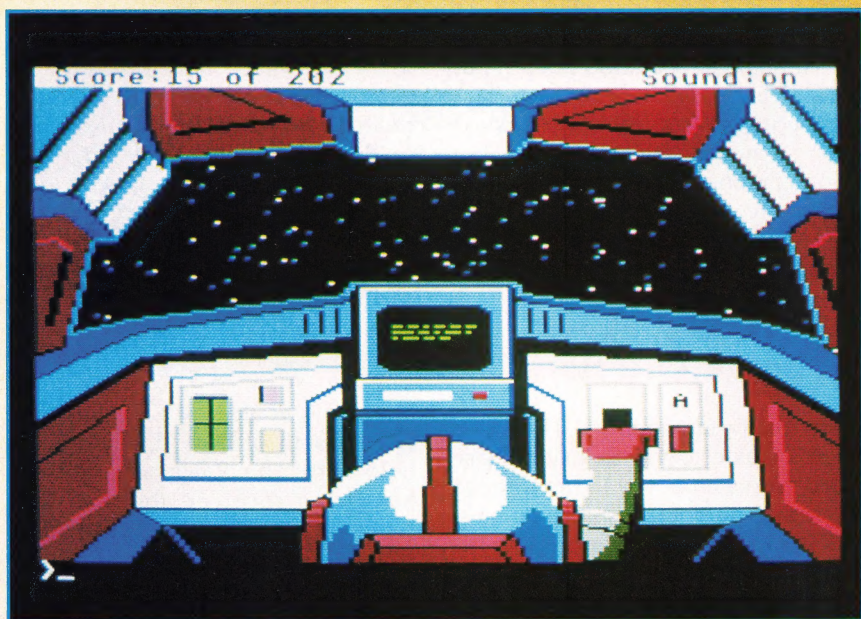


friendship ends in the Troll's world. After spending years putting up with humans clanking over the bridge to pull on the Dungeon's bell-rope, the Troll's good humour has finally cracked. It has been decided to let the Troll deal with all reader's letters, as the postman has now refused to cross the bridge for fear of another thrashing. I will apologise now for any reader he insults in his replies, but if you ask a stupid question you'll only have yourself to blame!

The highlight of this month was the team's annual outing to the PC show at Earl's Court. Not only did we have all the delights of the Games Hall to look forward to, but we also each had a personal invite to private showings of new adventure software at some nearby hotels. And to put the icing on the cake, a cadillac had been laid on to take us to our desti-

nations! Arriving early, we made a rush for the British Telecom stand where we were given a preview of the new *Deja Vu II* adventure which will be released early next year. With the Troll's help, I managed to twist a pre-production copy of *Magnetic Scrolls'* latest epic entitled 'Fish' - (see our review in this month's game section).

As the whole team are completely mad about the *Dungeon Master* game, we were keen to find any news of forthcoming games in this style of role-playing. Mirrorsoft are, of course, promising to bring us a follow-up game from the same company. These 'Deeper Dungeons' will allow you to descend another five levels into even more deadly territory and I'm sure that we will all be holding our breath until this game appears. However, in the more immediate future, there appear to be



a few games in the offing which will help fill the gap. The most exciting of these games looks set to be GAL-DREGONS DOMAIN which in many ways looks very similar to Dungeon Master. The game is scheduled for an October release and you can be sure we will get a copy to preview as soon as it's available, to let you know what you are in for.

With lunch-time fast approaching, we decided to search for the promised chauffeur-driven, dream machine and soon we were being whisked off to the hotel preview. Here we found the Sierra On-Line company who are responsible for the best graphic adventures on the market. And the good news is that there are a host of new games about to burst upon us. Space Quest III (The Pirates of Pestulon) is about to blast-off and complete what must be the best series of graphic adventures available on any computer system throughout the galaxy. If you are a fan of Leisure Suit Larry, you will be glad to know that he, too, is set to reappear, still searching for love - or at least something very close to it! The long-awaited Kings Quest IV game is also in the final stages of production and no doubt it, too, will be greeted by cheers all round. The game which will lead the assault on our Christmas shopping list will be Manhunter which involves your adventures in a science-fiction future of a post-holocaust New York. This game is now complete and should be arriving on British shores at any time.

While the world's press continued its attempt on the world record for cramming journalists into a bar, we were free to search the far cor-

ners of the room. Here we found Fergus Mcneil who you may recall was responsible for the spoof adventure, 'Bored of the Rings'. Fergus has just finished assisting the Abstract Concepts company to create their latest adventure, 'Parisian Knights'. This adventure is set in Paris between the two world wars and your part is that of a British secret agent who is set to foil the plans of the nasty German brown-shirts. Fergus also revealed that in addition to putting the finishing touches to a separate adventure from his Delta 4, company he has also found time to get engaged to Anna Popkess whom he helped co-write the Mindfighter game.

Pausing only to grab our party sack of freebie badges and Afterburner T shirts, we made our farewells and set off home to the Dungeon, happy in the knowledge

that there are some great new worlds of fun and mystery about to arrive for all ST adventure fans.

Dungeon Master topaz key

Help! I am stuck in Dungeon Master on the Level with all the doors and the topaz key.

James Smith, Finchley, London

Dungeon Master second level

I have recently bought Dungeon Master. The trouble is I can't get any further than the second Level as I used up all my keys. The Mega hints in ST Action were useful, but I still can't get past.

Nick Wheeler, Worthing, Sussex.

There are stacks of keys on this level, but they are awkward to find. Being a foolish adventurer, you haven't told me how far you have got, so I don't know which keys you are missing! Your problem is probably caused by the fact that your funny, round, human eyes are inferior to those of a troll and that's why you can't see them. Many of the keys are made of iron and these keys are the same colour as the stone floor. This makes things difficult, as every key on this level is to be found lying on the floor! If you are using a TV as a monitor, it is not easy to spot them. These keys are easier to see when you are standing one pace back from them with a slightly dimmed torch. The other solution that may help, is to remember that there are a few doors that



have no key and they will only open when you give them a hefty swipe with a sword or axe.

I should mention that I finished this game some time ago and I thought I had finally kicked the habit. While looking into your problem, I again got hooked and spent another night driving myself nuts - thanks a lot!

Legend of the Sword Stake near the Lake

Could you please HELP. I am stuck in Legend of the Sword. How do I escape having been captured and tied to a stake near the lake? I wonder if I could get back-copies of ST Action as I only started getting it on issue 5?

Ray Watson, Barnsley

Tricky game this one. Looks nice and pretty, but there are some really nasty puzzles hidden under the surface. You will need a piece of broken glass to cut the ropes and to get this you need to smash the bottle before you are captured.

As for buying back-copies, I have no doubt that, if you send lots of money to the front office in Chichester, they will be able to help you. I know for a fact that the Editor will sell you his granny if the price is right! Anyway, why do you want the issues before number 5 - I wasn't replying to letters before then!

Guild of Thieves Fishy Bear

Could you help me with The Guild of Thieves? No matter what I do with the fish, the bear always kills me.

John Nedoïr, Newcastle UponTyne

I am reliably informed by Evil Edna, the witch, that the solution to this problem is to smear the fish with

poison before feeding the bear.

You may wonder why I have risked going to see Edna about your letter. The reason is that I couldn't read your handwriting! I am sure your surname is not 'Nedoïr', but Edna is going to cast a spell which will make all your friends call you that - just to teach you a lesson. Mind you, I still prefer Nedoïr!

Hitchhickers screening door

I am totally stumped in 'The Hitch Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy'. Please could you tell me how to get through the screening door? I know you have to show the door intelligence with tea and no tea, but I don't know how!

Mathew Wood, Basingstoke.

Do you want the short answer or the long answer? The short one is I don't know. In an effort to find out I rang someone who does know and he proceeded to explain. Half-an-hour later I ceased taking notes and went and lay down! It appears that the door won't let you pass unless you have solved all the puzzles that are to be solved. Have you got the tool from Marvin? Have you put the fluff in the pot and grown a plant? Have you any idea what I'm talking about? - I'm not sure I have.

I think the best answer for both of us is to hope that some clever devil reads this and decides to put both of us out of our misery and send you a complete answer.

Shadowgate landslide

I need help in Shadowgate. Is there any way into the room above the ledge that breaks? How do I move the landslide beside the waterfall.

Tod Lillo, Willard, Ohio

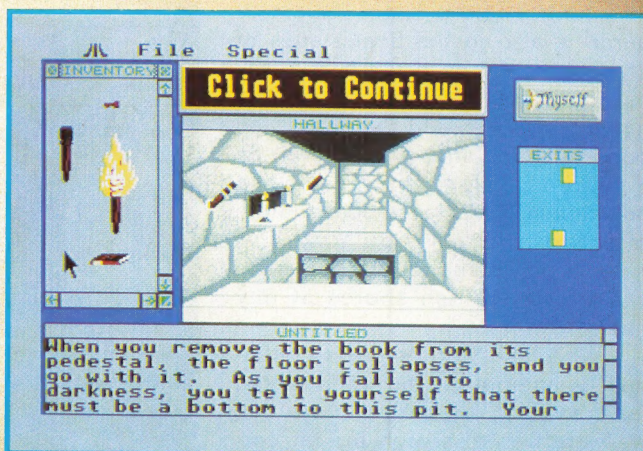
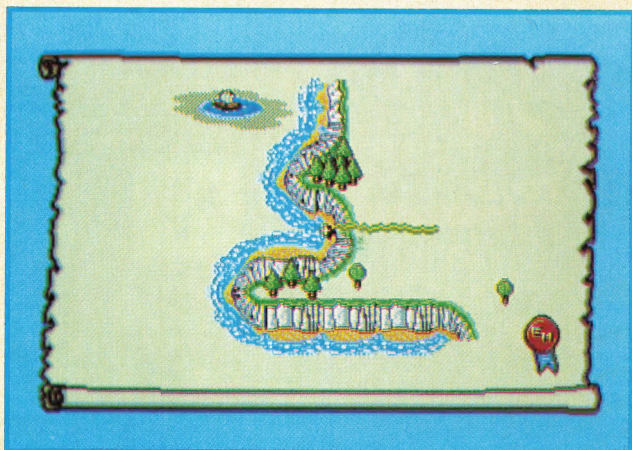
The good news is that you can't! In both cases the problems are just there to confuse you. However, in both cases there is another entrance nearby. Try examining one of the torches next to the dodgy ledge and also remember what is always to be found behind waterfalls.

No doubt you are also wondering what happened to the other four thousand questions you asked? Well, I ate them!

The Troll would also like to thank Doris Booth of Bury, Lancs for her help with The Pawn adventure. I have also received the complete solution to the Corruption game from David Soulsby of Whitelea Dale, Cramlington. Goodness knows how David solved this game so quickly as it is a real tricky devil.

If you have any hints, tips, views or queries why not write to the Troll.

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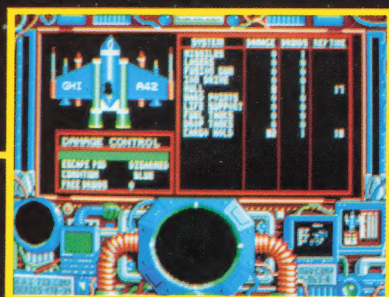
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